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THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

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(12th February to 27th February, 1946)

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OF THE
SIXTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,
1946



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v
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

President :

THE HONOURABLE MR. G. V. MAVALANKAR.

Deputy President :

SIR MUHAMMAD YAMIN KHAN, M.L.A.

Panel of Chairmen :

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SARDAR MANGAL SINGH, M.L.A.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Monday, 25th February, 1946

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Mr. G. V. Mavalankar) in the Chair.

MEMBER SWORN

Mr. Richard Vincent Fenton, I.C.S., M.L.A. (Government of India: Nominated Official).

Sri R. Venkatasubba Reddiar: On a point of order, Sir. Is the Honourable Member who has just taken the oath of allegiance aged 25?

Mr. President: That is hardly a point of order. However, I think he must be above that age.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Is there an age limit, even for nominations?

Mr. President: We now proceed with the business.

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS†

WRITTEN ANSWERS

STOPPING OF WOMEN WORKING IN COAL MINES

466. ***Prof. N. G. Ranga:** Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state:

(a) When Government propose to stop women working in Coal Mines now that the war is over; and

(b) whether they have any schemes ready to provide these women who have been brought away from their villages any alternative employment or to provide them free return passages and to free them also from any debts that they may have incurred while at work in the mines in the hope of repaying them through their savings at the mines?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Governments have no intention of entirely prohibiting the employment of women in Coal Mines. Their employment underground has, however, been prohibited from the 1st February 1946.

(b) The Welfare Fund of the Central Government has decided to open vegetable farms in the coalfields and the various Mining Associations of employers and the Provincial Governments of Bengal and Bihar were asked to do everything possible to provide atonce alternative employment for women released from underground work. Majority of these women have already been provided with surface* work in the coalfields.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF INDIAN LABOUR CONFERENCE

467. ***Prof. N. G. Ranga:** Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state:

(a) the recommendations made by the Indian Labour Conference that met in November, 1945;

(b) the conclusions or decisions reached by Government thereon; and

(c) what steps the Government of India propose to take to implement them?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) None.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

†The question hour for the day having been cancelled, the answers were laid on the table of the House.—*Ed. of D.*

SERVICE CONDITIONS OF INDIAN SEAMEN EMPLOYED ON BRITISH SHIPS

468. *Mr. P. B. Gole: Has the attention of the Honourable the Commerce Member been drawn to the conditions of Indian Seamen employed on the British ships regarding (i) wages, (ii) hours of work, (iii) leave, (iv) Insurance, (v) space on board, etc., and the hostile attitude taken in this respect by the British ship-owners in the International Maritime Conference held at Copenhagen? If so, what steps have Government taken or propose to take to ensure equal treatment to Indian seamen regarding wages, etc.?

The Honourable Dr. Sir M. Azisul Huque: The Government of India are aware of the conditions of Indian seamen employed on British ships. A fair measure of agreement was reached at the Copenhagen Conference on all the questions which came up for consideration except in the case of wages, hours of work and manning. The Copenhagen Conference was only a preparatory one and all the subjects covered by it will be further considered at a maritime session of the International Labour Conference to be held in Seattle in June next when final decisions will be arrived at. The Government of India are now examining the tentative conclusions reached at Copenhagen with a view to deciding the attitude which they should take at the Seattle Conference and I may assure the Honourable Member that in doing so they will try to secure the best possible conditions of service for Indian seamen.

GOVERNMENT'S HOUSE BUILDING PROGRAMME FOR BIG CITIES

469. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Has the attention of the Honourable the Labour Member been drawn to the editorial remarks of the *Statesman* of the 23rd January, 1946, that "Yet it must be remembered that almost no dwelling has been built in any Indian town during the last six years," and is he in a position to contradict this statement?

(b) What steps have Government taken to encourage building in congested cities like Bombay and Calcutta?

(c) Are the controls operating still to prevent structures going up, or are they going out of their way to smoothen out difficulties of builders?

(d) Have the Government of India received from, or sent to, Provincial Governments any concrete plan in order to bring into existence increased number of buildings in India?

(e) Are Government aware that the building trade is the most promising one for the absorption of those who may be retrenched from Government service?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes. As we have no information regarding the number of buildings constructed during the last six years by private persons, it is impossible either to support or to contradict the statement as it is worded; but I should like to point out that the controls for the use of building materials were not imposed till about the latter half of 1941.

(b) Presumably the Honourable Member has in mind private building. The Government of India have recently taken some steps of a general nature to encourage private building all over India and not only particularly in Bombay and Calcutta.

They have withdrawn the instructions which they issued to Provincial Governments regarding the exercise of control over building construction. They have advised Provincial Governments generally to encourage private building by all means in their power. They have issued specific instructions about the release of bricks and increased quantities of other building materials like cement, steel, timber, etc., which are under the control of the Government of India, have been made available to private builders.

Government of India have further decided to convene a meeting in Delhi in the first week of March 1946, of representatives of the building trade in order to discuss with them the factors that are still impeding the progress of private building in this country.

(c) The Government of India believe that the relaxations are going to make it easier for builders to put up structures in future.

(d) The Government of India have addressed provinces in regard to a short-term scheme for the encouragement of the construction of housing for industrial labour and those other workers in urban areas who are unable to pay an economic rent. The scheme involves a subsidy from the Centre provided provinces make an equivalent subsidy and will be referred to by the Finance Member in his Budget speech.

(e) Yes.

GOVERNMENT'S POLICY *re* RESIDENTIAL USE OF WARTIME TEMPORARY STRUCTURES

470. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Is the Honourable the Labour Member aware of the special measures being taken in the United Kingdom to increase activity in house building? If so, what are those measures?

(b) Do Government propose to indicate their policy with regard to the following suggestion made by the *Statesman* of the 23rd January, 1946:

"The Government would be, therefore, well advised to consider if until the law of supply and demand has reasserted itself, residential use is possible of the temporary structures put up during the war"?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes. These measures have been fully explained in the British Ministry of Information pamphlet No. R. 520, a copy of which will be found in the Library of the House.

(b) The suggestion made by the *Statesman* of the 23rd January, 1946, was in respect of the temporary buildings constructed in Calcutta and I take it that the Honourable Member wants to know the policy of Government in respect of those buildings. I am concerned only with the buildings constructed for Central Government Civil Offices which will no doubt be retained for use until they have become surplus to our requirements.

ABOLITION OF DEFENCE OF INDIA RULES

471. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) When does the Honourable the Law Member intend to abolish the Defence of India Rules, now that the emergency of the war, which brought these Rules into force, has ceased to exist?

(b) Is it a fact that from many quarters complaints have been made in representations to Government as well as in the press, about the oppressive nature of many of these Rules?

(c) When does the notification extending the operation of these Rules expire?

(d) Have Government considered whether the powers, which they have under the normal laws of the country, do not give them sufficient authority to carry on Government? If so, in which directions have they found it necessary to supplement the powers given under normal laws during the period of peace?

(e) Will Government make a statement of their policy before this House and set aside a day for the discussion of this subject?

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy: (a) and (c). The Honourable Member appears to be under a misapprehension. There has been no notification extending the operation of the rules which, in the absence of express cancellation in the meantime, will remain in force for so long as the Defence of India Act remains in force, namely, until six months after the termination of the war.

(b) There has been a considerable volume of mainly uncritical attack on the rules at large, but comparatively few of the rules have formed the subject of specific complaint.

(d) The question arising is not one of supplementing powers otherwise available, but of whether all or any of the rules should be expressly cancelled in advance of the date on which the expiration of the Act will put the rules out of operation.

(e) The policy of Government is to keep the rules in force until they are put out of operation by the expiration of the Act, save to the extent to which they may from time to time be satisfied that any particular rules are no longer required. In pursuance of this policy 42 rules were cancelled by the late Defence Department Notification No. 3 D.C.(4)-45, dated the 12th January 1946. If any Honourable Member desires a debate on this subject, it is open to him to give notice of a Resolution. Government do not propose to set aside a day for the purpose.

STABILIZATION OF AGRICULTURAL PRICES

472. *Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Will the Agriculture Secretary be pleased to lay a statement on the table of the House for the information of Members containing any new proposals for the stabilization of agricultural prices for the next five years in order to bring about prosperity to the Indian villages?

***Sir Pheroze Kharegat:** Proposals for the stabilisation of agricultural prices will be formulated as soon as the recommendations of the Sub-Committee of the Policy Committee on Agriculture set up to advise how agricultural prices should be fixed and made effective, are received.

EXPENSES INCURRED ON PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION

473. *Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Will the Honourable the Leader of the House be pleased to state:

(a) if the Government of India are paying all expenses incurred by the Parliamentary Delegation which is now touring India;

(b) if Government have received representations from public bodies in India protesting against the arrival in India of this "Goodwill Mission" at the present juncture; and

(c) if the suggestion to send out to India this Delegation was first put forward to the British Prime Minister by a Member of this Assembly?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) As already announced in the Press Note which appeared in the newspapers of the 12th January 1946, His Majesty's Government is meeting all the expenses connected with the Parliamentary Delegation's visit to India. A small secretarial staff and a meeting room were provided by the Government of India for the convenience of the Delegation.

(b) No.

(c) I have no information.

MEAGRE REPARATIONS FOR INDIA FROM GERMANY

474. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member please state on what principles reparations from Germany were decided?

(b) Have the Government of India represented that the sacrifice in men and money and in deprivations, diseases and death was actually bigger for India than any other belligerent?

(c) Have they represented that, compared to her capacity, much larger financial burdens were thrown on India during the war period?

(d) In view of these and other circumstances, have they represented that the share coming to India is very meagre and unsatisfactory?

The Honourable Dr. Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) The main principles on the basis of which allocations of German reparations have been made are:

(1) budgetary cost,

(2) costs of direct damage and occupation,

(3) man-years allocable to the war effort in respect of the armed forces and those spent in munitions industries, and

(4) losses of life both of armed forces and of civilians.

(b), (c) and (d). Yes. India has been allotted 2 per cent. of general reparations and 2.9 per cent. of capital and industrial equipment and in view of the decisions at the Paris Conference, the question of any further representation for the time does not arise.

TRANSFER OF U. K. SHARE OF REPARATIONS TO INDIA

475. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Has the Honourable the Commerce Member represented that the entire share coming to the United Kingdom in the matter of reparations should be transferred to India, in view of the very heavy debt which the U.K. is owing to this country?

(b) Have Government represented that merchant ships which are coming as part of these reparations, should be transferred in a proportion larger than the two per cent. overall, in view of the special needs of India in the case of merchant shipping?

(c) Have the Government of India appropriated any sums to the credit of Germany and Italy, which may be with the Custodian of Enemy Property? If so, what are these sums, and where are they at present?

(d) On what basis are these sums going to be used?

(e) Is it intended that a part of them will be given to those Indian nationals, who have incurred losses of their assets in enemy countries?

The Honourable Dr. Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) No.

(b) A claim on behalf of India for a share in the German merchant navy was pressed at the German Reparations Conference in Paris. But there does not appear to be any chance of ships being available to India as the allocation of merchant shipping is to be in proportion to shipping losses.

(c) and (d). The only sums appropriated by the Government of India out of the amounts lying to the credit of Germany and Italy are (1) those realised on account of fees due to Custodian of Enemy Property under paragraph 11 of Enemy Property (Custody and Registration) Order, 1939, and (2) payments made by the Custodian on account of Income-tax due on the post-vesting incomes of German and Italian nationals and concerns. The amounts of fee levied under (1) are:

(i) from German assets—Rs. 9,10,900.

(ii) from Italian assets—Rs. 89,200.

The figures are inclusive of amounts levied from the beginning of the war to the end of the financial year 1944-45. Figures in respect of income-tax under (2) above are not readily available.

The sums realised under (1) above have been credited to Government Revenues as fees levied for the purpose of meeting expenditure incurred by Government for the custody and preservation of enemy property in contemplation of arrangements to be made at the conclusion of peace. All payments under (2) above have been credited to Government Revenues under the head "Income-tax other than Corporation Tax".

(e) Does not arise.

EXPORT OF UNAUTHORISED FOODGRAINS FROM CERTAIN PORTS IN INDIA

476. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Has the Food Secretary looked closely into the export of unauthorised foodgrains from the ports of Portuguese India and from certain other ports from the western coast of India?

(i) What steps have they taken to deal with this kind of leakage in the available food supply?

(c) What control have Government got over the Provincial Governments in the matter of the ukases, by which they not only prevent movement of food material between one district and another inside the Province, but have imposed absolute prohibitions with regard to the movement of foodgrains, milk products, ghee, sugar and other articles as between one Province and another?

(d) Have Government got any estimate of the reserves and stock in trade in the matter of foodgrains and other useful food items carried by private individuals in various Provinces, as against the reserves carried by Government and the rationing authorities?

(e) Is it a fact that transport difficulties in the matter of foodgrains still continue even in the case of Provincial Governments and rationing authorities?

Mr. B. R. Sen: (a) and (b). No cases of unauthorised export of foodgrains from ports mentioned by the Honourable Member have been brought to the notice of Government.

(c) Movements between one district and another of a province are primarily the concern of the Provincial Government and the Central Government do not intervene in such cases. As regards prohibition of movement of foodgrains between one province and another, this is an integral part of our scheme of distribution of surpluses under the Basic Plan. As to other foodstuffs there is now an understanding between the Provincial Governments and the Government of India that no such restrictions will be imposed without consultation with the Central Government.

(d) No, Sir. But Provincial Governments have returns of stocks of foodgrains held by licensees under Provincial Foodgrains Control Orders which generally prohibit the holding of stocks exceeding 20 maunds by non-licensees.

(e) The transport position is generally easier than it was during war-time and movement of foodgrains is given very high priority.

EXPORT OF FOOD MATERIALS FROM INDIA

477. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Has the Food Secretary got any estimate of the number of parcels containing food material, which are sent out from India by Army personnel and civilians to the United Kingdom and other countries?

(b) Is it a fact that such despatch had very much increased during the years of war? If so, do Government propose to put a check now on the total volume of food material, particularly butter, leaving this country by this method, in view of the shortage in India generally?

(c) Have Government got any estimate of the amount of animals, meat, foodgrains, milk products, ghee and sugar leaving India as provisions in the ships that call at Indian ports and leave Indian shores for outside destinations either with military personnel or with civil passengers?

Mr. B. R. Sen: (a) No, Sir.

(b) It is likely that the number of such parcels went up during the war years. Export of butter by civilians in such parcels is already prohibited. The whole question is being re-examined in the light of the recent deterioration in the food situation.

(c) Yes. The returns received from the Export Trade Controllers show that from July to December 1945, ships calling at Indian ports took on board about 650 poultry, 190 tons of foodgrains, 14 tons of ghee and butter, one cwt. of other milk products and 25 tons of sugar per month on an average.

ADMISSION OF GOVERNMENT OF INDIA SCHOLARS AS APPRENTICES IN FACTORIES IN ENGLAND

478. *Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Education Secretary be pleased to state:

(a) if it is a fact that a number of the Government of India scholars who were recently sent to England were admitted only into degree or diploma courses and not for research work; if so, how many were thus admitted for non-research work, and why;

(b) whether it is a fact that a number of scholars who had already taken M.Sc. and B.Sc. Degrees with high distinction are obliged to join for Degree courses again, and why;

(c) if it is a fact that the India House has pleaded its inability to get any good proportion of our scholars admitted as apprentices in factories; and

(d) what special steps Government propose to take to prevent this waste of time of our scholars?

Dr. John Sargent: (a) and (b). It is a fact that in some cases, the Government of India scholars who have been sent to the United Kingdom have been admitted to Honours Degree or Diploma courses. Total figures are not yet available but the number of such cases is not large. For instance, information

received from the High Commissioner in regard to students at Manchester, Sheffield and Newcastle-on-Tyne shows that 21 Central and 11 Provincial sponsored students are doing post-graduate courses as against 5 Central and 5 Provincial students who are doing an Honours Degree or Diploma course. In a few cases genuine mistakes have been made, which are now being rectified but the main reason why some students have been allocated to Honours Degree or Diploma courses rather than to Post-graduate research is that although they may have good science degrees of the ordinary kind their qualifications do not provide an adequate background for an advanced study of the special subjects for which they were selected. In the case of a number of subjects regarded as of great importance for India's post-war development the facilities in this country have been either non-existent or of an elementary character. Students of these must therefore begin more or less at the beginning. Another reason is that for certain subjects the best training is provided in Polytechnics which only offer Diploma courses. These are not familiar to and, therefore, not appreciated by some of our students who are inclined to consider a Doctorate as always a better qualification than a Diploma.

(c) The scheme which is being administered by the Education Department provides only for educational courses and not for apprenticeship in factories though in the case of nearly all technological courses a period or periods of practical training in industry will form part of the course. Arrangements for this are made by the educational institutions concerned. This was made clear in the brochure of information issued to students and at the interviews. No complaints in this respect have come to our notice.

If, however, the Honourable Member refers to apprenticeship in factories under the Technical Training Scheme administered by Labour Department, I understand that the British Ministry of Labour and National Service, through whom such apprenticeship is being arranged, has assured the High Commissioner that apprenticeship facilities will be made available for our technicians as soon as possible, but that there may be some delay or difficulty on account of the fact that the British industry is at present engaged in the process of re-conversion from war to peace activities.

(d) There are only a few cases in which genuine errors appear to have occurred. All those cases are being looked into urgently and my latest information is that most of them have been already put right. Two senior officers of this Department have been specially deputed to London as Educational Liaison Officers to strengthen the High Commissioner's Education Department and to assist in regard to the placing and general welfare of Indian students. Reports recently received from them indicate that the authorities of Universities and Technical Colleges, in spite of the great pressure on their accommodation at the present time, are adopting a very sympathetic attitude towards the needs of Indian students.

BREACH OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN STATE OF SIROHI AND GOVERNMENT

479. *Mr. Vadilal Lalubhai: Will the Honourable the Leader of the House be pleased to state:

(a) whether he is aware of any departures from the terms of the agreement reached between the State of Sirohi and the Government on the 1st October 1917;

(b) if the reply to (a) be in the affirmative, on what grounds they are allowed; and

(c) if the reply to (a) is in the negative, whether it is a fact that taxes are levied on pilgrims to Mount Abu by Government authorities in direct contravention to Clause No. 21, Appendix A, of the said Agreement; if so, whether Government propose to give assurance that they will be removed immediately?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No special tax is levied on pilgrims *as such* entering the Leased Area of Abu, but since 1924, a Visitors Tax has been recovered from all classes of visitors entering the Abu Municipal Area, which is co-extensive with the Leased Area, except those entering on foot. The proceeds of the tax are utilised for defraying the heavy expenditure incurred in providing essential services and amenities for the inhabitants of, and visitors to, Mount Abu.

REPERCUSSIONS OF INDIA'S IMPORT TRADE ON INDIGENOUS INDUSTRIES

480. *Mr. Vadilal Lallubhai: Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state:

(a) the present composition of India's import trade as between the consumers' goods and capital goods;

(b) whether he has examined the figures of our imports and exports during the last seven months of the current financial year; if so, why recently our exports are dwindling;

(c) if it is a fact that our imports contain a major proportion of consumers' goods;

(d) if the reply to (c) is in the affirmative, whether Government have taken into consideration its repercussions on the respective indigenous industries which eventually will face the problem of severe competition from abroad; if so, in what way; and

(e) whether the Government of India have in view any policy in regard to protection of indigenous industries from the danger of foreign competition; if they have any, the outlines of the same?

The Honourable Dr. Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) I lay on the table a statement showing imports of consumer goods and capital and other classes of goods during the eight months of the current financial year (April-November 1945) for which figures are available.

(b) Yes, for eight months as mentioned above. Exports of Indian merchandise during this period were actually higher than those in the corresponding period of the financial year 1944-45 or 1943-44.

(c) The position is that even taking into account motor spirit and kerosene under consumer goods the trend of import trade is more or less equally divided between consumer goods and other classes of goods including capital goods.

(d) and (e). Yes. I may invite the attention of the Honourable Member to my answer on the 5th February, to Mr. Manu Subedar's Starred Question No. 21, about Government's long-term tariff policy. An interim Tariff Board has also been set up to investigate the claims of industries started or developed during the war and I lay on the table a copy of the Commerce Department's Resolution, dated 3rd November 1945, setting up the Board. Government will take steps to ensure speedy action on the recommendations of the Tariff Board.

Statement showing import of consumer and capital goods into British India during the period April to November 1945

	Rs. (lakhs)	
Consumer goods—		
Food, drink and tobacco	14,65	
Motor spirit, kerosene, vegetable oil, copra kernel	46,27	
Manufactured articles	19,83	
Postal articles and baggage	2,01	
		82,76
Capital goods—		
Machinery of all kinds	12,98
Other classes of goods—		
Raw materials as well as semi-manufactured articles.		66,48
Total Imports		1,62,22

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

RESOLUTION

TARIFFS

New Delhi, the 3rd November 1945

No. 218-T. (55)/45.—In the statement on industrial policy issued by the Government of India on the 23rd April 1945, it was announced that, pending the formulation of a tariff policy appropriate to the postwar needs and conditions of the country and the establishment of permanent machinery for the purpose, Government would set up machinery for investigating claims from industries, which have been started or developed in war-time and which are established on sound lines, to assistance or protection during the transition period. A press communique issued on the same date invited industries to address their claims to the Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of Commerce.

2. Several industries have accordingly applied for assistance or protection, and on a preliminary examination of their claims, the Government of India have come to the conclusion that applications submitted by the following industries call for a detailed examination:—

- (i) non-ferrous metals, including antimony;
- (ii) grinding wheels;
- (iii) caustic soda and bleaching powder;
- (iv) sodium thiosulphate, sodium sulphite anhydrous, sodium bisulphite;
- (v) phosphates and phosphoric acid;
- (vi) butter colour, aerated water powder colour;
- (vii) rubber manufactures;
- (viii) fire hose;
- (ix) wood screws;
- (x) steel hoops for baling.

Other applications are under the consideration of Government, and further action in their case will be taken in due course.

3. In addition to the industries which have applied for assistance or protection, there are certain industries the starting of which was considered essential by the Government of India under conditions created by the war. Early in 1940 Government announced that specified industries promoted with their direct encouragement during war-time might feel assured that, if they were conducted on sound business lines, they would, by such measures as Government might devise, be protected against unfair competition from outside India. In accordance with this decision, the following industries have been given an assurance of protection against unfair competition after the war:—

- (i) bichromates;
- (ii) steel pipes and tubes up to a nominal bore of 4 inches;
- (iii) aluminium;
- (iv) calcium chloride;
- (v) calcium carbide;
- (vi) starch.

Of these industries, only those engaged in the manufacture of bichromates, calcium chloride and starch have so far applied for assistance or protection during the transition period. The Government of India consider that the applications submitted by these three industries also call for immediate investigation.

4. For the purpose of these and any subsequent investigations, the Government of India have decided to set up a Tariff Board for a period not exceeding two years, in the first instance. The Board will consist of:—

PRESIDENT :

Sir R. K. Shanmukham Chetty, K.C.I.E.

MEMBERS :

Mr. C. C. Desai, C.I.E., I.C.S.

Prof. H. L. Dey, D.Sc. (London).

The Board will include one more Member whose name will be announced shortly. Mr. Desai will act as Secretary to the Board in addition to his duties as Member.

5. The Tariff Board is requested to undertake, in such order as it thinks fit, the investigation of claims put forward by the industries specified in paragraphs 2 and 3 above. In the case of each industry the Board will, after such examination as it considers necessary, report whether the industry satisfies the following conditions:—

- (1) that it is established and conducted on sound business lines; and
- (2) (a) that, having regard to the natural or economic advantages enjoyed by the industry and its actual or probable costs, it is likely within a reasonable time to develop sufficiently to be able to carry on successfully without protection or State assistance; or

(b) that it is an industry to which it is desirable in the national interest to grant protection or assistance and that the probable cost of such protection or assistance to the community is not excessive. Where a claim to protection or assistance is found to be established i.e., if condition (1) and condition (2) (a) or (b) are satisfied, the Board will recommend—

(i) whether, at what rate and in respect of what articles or class or description of articles, a protective duty should be imposed;

(ii) what additional or alternative measures should be taken to protect or assist the industry; and

(iii) for what period, not exceeding three years, the tariff or other measures recommended should remain in force.

In making its recommendations the Board will give due weight to the interests of consumer in the light of the prevailing conditions and also consider how the recommendations affect industries using the articles in respect of which protection is to be granted. Since relief, to be effective, should be afforded without delay, the Board is requested to complete its enquiries with all possible expedition and to submit a report as soon as the investigation of the claim of each industry is concluded.

6. The headquarters of the Board will be at Bombay, but it will visit such other places as it thinks necessary for purposes of its enquiries. Firms and persons interested in any of these industries, or in industries dependent on the use of the products of these industries, who desire that their views should be considered, should address their representations to the Secretary to the Board.

7. Any claims hereafter received from other industries which in the opinion of the Government of India are suitable for examination by the Board will be referred to the Board in due course for examination.

8. The Government of India trust that Provincial Governments and Administrations will afford the Board all the assistance which it may require and will comply with any request for information which may be addressed to them by it.

ORDER

ORDERED that a copy of this Resolution be communicated to all Provincial Governments, all Chief Commissioners, the several Departments of the Government of India, the Political Department, the Private and Military Secretaries to His Excellency the Viceroy, the Central Board of Revenue, the Auditor General, the High Commissioner for India in London, the Economic Adviser to the Government of India, the Director of Commercial Intelligence, Calcutta, the Indian Trade Commissioner, London, the Indian Government Trade Commissioners at New York, Buenos Aires, Toronto, Alexandria, Mombasa, Tehran and Sydney, His Majesty's Trade Commissioner in India, the American Consulate General, Calcutta, the Canadian Trade Commissioner in India, the Australian Trade Commissioner in India, the Secretary, Tariff Board, Bombay and all the recognised Chambers of Commerce and Associations.

ORDERED that a copy be communicated to the Government of Burma.

ORDERED also that it be published in the *Gazette of India*.

N. R. PILLAI, Secy.

WORKING HOURS OF FACTORY WORKERS IN INDIA

481. *Mr. Vadlal Lalubhai: Will the Honourable the Labour Member kindly state:

(a) the actual daily working hours of factory workers in India according to different industries including collieries and plantations;

(b) the total number of factories coming under the purview of the Indian Factories Act, 1934;

(c) how many of them are working one shift, how many of them two shifts and how many of them three shifts; and

(d) the working hours in each shift?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Two statements showing the daily working hours in industries and plantations are placed on the table of the House. No detailed information about the actual working hours in collieries is available.

(b) Total number of factories under the Factories Act was 14,922 in 1944, the last year for which figures are available.

(c) and (d). No information is available.

Statement showing hours of work per day in factories

1. Cotton	7½—10	
2. Jute	9 —12	
3. Silk	7½— 9	
4. Woolen	9 —10	
5. Engineerig (including railway workshops.)	7½—12	for shift workers (in some cases night shift workers work for 7 hours).
6. Matches	8½—10	
7. Potteries	8	for shift workers.
	9	for general workers.
8. Printing Presses	7½— 8½	
9. Glass	7½— 9	for shift workers.
	10	for general workers.
10. Chemical and Pharmaceutical works.	7 —10	
11. Sugar	8	for Manufacturing section.
	8—9	for Engineering section.
12. Cotton Ginning and Bailing	9 —10	
13. Rice Mills	7 —10	
14. Cement	7½— 8	for shift workers.
	8 — 9	for general workers.
15. Paper	7 — 8	in continuous process shifts.
16. Mica Factories	9	
17. Shellac Manufacture	8 --10	
18. Bidi, Cigar and Cigarettes	11 —12	for bidi and cigar.
	8 — 9	for cigarettes.
19. Carpet Weaving	9 —10	
20. Tanneries and Leather goods manufacture.	U. P.	Madras
	9	Day shift
	8 — 9	Night shift.
	9	for men,
	8	for women.
	5	for children.

Statement showing daily hours of work in Plantations

Assam and Bengal—

Tea Gardens—

Hazaria basis (normal working time)	5—6
Tioca basis (overtime)	3—4
Pluckers	10—11
Kangra Valley	8— 9
Dehra Dun	8
Almora	6
Tea and Coffee Estates in South India	8— 9
Rubber Estates	5— 7

**PRAYER FACILITIES FOR MUSLIM EMPLOYEES OF GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS,
NEW DELHI**

482. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether the Government of India Press, New Delhi, had a big room set apart for prayers for the Muslim employees who used to offer their prayers therein since the beginning?

(b) Are Government aware that the Public Works Department have taken away the big room and given a small room which is insufficient for the Muslim employees to offer their prayers, and that they have to offer it now in batches?

(c) Are Government aware that the Muslim employees submitted an application for the allotment of a big room to the Controller and that the question

was also raised in the Works Committee but the present Controller not only did not take any action, but is even trying to get the small room also vacated?

(d) Do Government propose to allot a big room as before so that the Muslim employees may offer their prayers therein with ease?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) and (b). The 'Big' room referred to is the Muslim Tiffin Room which was being used without permission for occasional prayers by the Muslim employees of the Government of India Press, New Delhi, and the dining was being done in the manufacturing room. This was objected to by the Medical Officer of Health, New Delhi Municipal Committee. It was, therefore, necessary to use the tiffin room exclusively for the purposes for which it was constructed.

(c) Yes, the application has been submitted by the Controller to the Government of India. The statement made in the latter part of the question is not correct.

(d) No big room had previously been allotted.

DEDUCTION OF FRIDAY PRAYER-TIME FROM GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS STAFF'S OVERTIME

483. ***Nawab Siddique Ali Khan:** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether the one hour concession for Friday prayers granted to the Government of India Press Staff is deducted from their overtime?

(b) Is it a fact that up to 1928 the one hour allowed for Friday prayers was not deducted from overtime and the same hour was counted for attendance on duty?

(c) Do Government propose to count this one hour concession for Friday prayers in duty hours, as the hour is used for prayers only and not for any other private work?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes, but upto 1981.

(c) No. Attention of the Honourable Member is drawn to the reply given in the Legislative Assembly on the 20th August 1984, by the Honourable Sir Frank Noyce to starred question No. 668.

PROTECTION OF INDIAN SUGAR INDUSTRY

484. ***Prof. N. G. Ranga:** Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state what steps Government propose to take to afford adequate protection to the Indian Sugar Industry in view of the fact that the existing protection is due to expire in March, 1946?

The Honourable Dr. Sir M. Azizul Huque: Government propose to continue for a further period of one year from 31st March 1946, the existing level of protection to the Indian Sugar Industry, pending a detailed investigation by a Tariff Board under more normal conditions.

FACILITIES FOR AGRICULTURE IN THE CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR

485. ***Seth Govind Das:** (a) Will the Agriculture Secretary please state if Government are conscious of the fact that agriculture in the Central Provinces and Berar and specially in the northern districts of the Province is badly suffering for want of labourers as *bidi* factories have absorbed most of the labourers of the villages who do not like to work in fields? If so, what steps do Government propose to take in this direction to see that agriculture does not suffer for lack of labourers?

(b) Is it a fact that prices of bullocks have gone very high in these days and cultivators do not get bullocks for cultivation? If so, what arrangements, if any, do Government propose to make for supplying bullocks to agriculturists on reasonable prices?

(c) Are Government prepared to give necessary facilities for importing cattle specially cows and bullocks from one Province to another?

(d) In view of the growing scarcity of bullocks and labourers in the villages of India, what arrangements, if any, do Government propose to make for the import of agricultural machinery? What facilities can be given to agriculturists for purchasing these machines?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) Government are aware of the fact that complaints to this effect were made to the Government of the Central Provinces and Berar who investigated them and came to the conclusion that though there was a shortage of labour, it could not be attributed wholly or even largely to the *bidi* industry, the latter had not affected agricultural operations appreciably. Accordingly the Provincial Government decided that no action was necessary.

(b) The price of bullocks has risen but in most areas such rise is in proportion to the general rise in the prices of agricultural commodities. Generally speaking, cultivation has not been held up because of lack of bullocks, but loans are being given by several Provincial Governments where required for the purchase of bullocks. It is not considered feasible to control bullock prices. The general measures being taken for the improvement of cattle will it is hoped make more bullocks available.

(c) Bans on the export of cattle from their territories have been imposed by several Provincial and State Governments. The Central Government have under consideration a proposal to call a conference of provincial representatives to discuss the question of the continuance or otherwise of these bans.

(d) Orders have already been placed for the import of tractors in accordance with the requirements of Provincial Governments. An officer has been sent to the U.S.A. to try and expedite the supply of these tractors. Tractors and other agricultural machinery available in India as surplus are also being taken over for distribution to Provincial Governments or failing them to others who need them. Import licences are freely granted to firms or individuals who desire to import agricultural machinery and tractors.

EXPORT FACILITIES TO MEET FODDER-FAMINE IN SOUTH INDIA

486. *Seth Govind Das: (a) Is the Agriculture Secretary aware of the fact that this year there is a fodder-famine in South India specially Karnatak? If so, what arrangements do Government propose to make to meet it?

(b) Do Government propose to send fodder from the Central Provinces to these scarcity affected places, if so, what facilities can be given to individuals to encourage them to export fodder from that Province?

(c) What facilities have Government given or propose to give to the public for growing more fodder?

(d) Do Government propose to throw open some reserve forests for free-grazing all over India as has been recently done by the Bombay Government?

(e) Do Government propose to give any grant to the public for converting small useless forests into good pastures? If not, why not, and do Government propose to reconsider the matter, in view of the shortage of fodder in the country every year?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) Yes. The Government of Madras have instructed the Forest Department to make as much hay and silage as possible for supply to famine stricken areas and have decided that the Bellary fodder division which was constituted for collection and supply of hay to the Military Farms Department should be expanded and two-thirds of the quota proposed for it should be diverted to meet civilian demands.

(b) An enquiry has been made from the Madras and Bombay Governments as to whether and how much fodder is needed from outside and from the Government of the Central Provinces and the Eastern States Agency as to how far they can arrange to supply such fodder.

(c) All the facilities provided in connection with the "Grow More Food" campaign are available for the growing of more food and fodder.

(d) The desirability of taking action on these lines has been commended to Provincial Governments for their consideration.

(e) Any concrete proposal received for this purpose through the Provincial Government concerned will be considered on its merits.

**INSTRUCTIONS TO PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS FOR PREVENTION OF
SLAUGHTER OF CERTAIN ANIMALS**

487. *Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava: (a) Will the Agriculture Secretary kindly state if it is a fact that the Government of India issued instructions to the Provincial Governments that slaughter of certain classes of animals including milch and pregnant cows and buffaloes be prohibited?

(b) Is it a fact that several Provincial Governments have not so far prohibited such slaughter? If so, which Provincial Governments have not complied with these instructions?

(c) Do Government propose to remind the defaulting Provincial Governments to carry out the instructions of the Government of India in this regard?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) The Government of India have not issued instructions to Provincial Governments. They did, however, suggest to them that they might impose restrictions on cattle slaughter for civil purposes similar to those imposed by the Central Government on slaughter for army requirements.

(b) Two Provinces—the Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province—have not imposed any such restrictions.

(c) As these Governments do not consider it necessary or desirable to impose such restrictions, no useful purpose will be served by issuing reminders.

SLOW PROGRESS OF EDUCATION IN ASSAM

488. *Sreejut Rohini Kumar Choudhuri: (a) Is the Education Secretary aware that progress of education in Assam has been greatly retarded during the last three years owing to the fact that an adequate quantity of kerosene oil for reading after nightfall was not given to the students and that the educational buildings and hostels attached thereto were in occupation of the Army Department?

(b) Is it a fact that for the above reasons students from Assam had heavily suffered in the results of the University examinations held in that Province?

(c) In view of the fact that University and School examinations will be held shortly, do Government propose to take necessary steps with the Departments concerned in order to give greater facilities for studies now?

(d) Are Government aware that notwithstanding their best efforts, the Government of Assam had failed so far either to get an increased quota of kerosene oil or to get educational buildings released?

Dr. John Sargent: (a) The Government of India are aware that the progress of education in Assam as elsewhere has been slowed up owing to the war. The causes mentioned by the Honourable Member may have contributed to this but cannot be regarded as the sole determining factors.

(b) and (c). The Government of India have no information in regard to this matter, but I shall be glad to bring it to the attention of the Provincial Government which is responsible for education in its area.

(d) No. The present supplies of kerosene oil are uniform throughout India and the internal distribution of kerosene oil is the responsibility of the Provincial Government.

As regards the release of educational buildings, the matter has presumably been taken up by the Government of Assam with the Military Authorities direct. Education Department have not so far received any request from the Provincial Government for any assistance in this connection. They have taken up the general question of the early release of educational buildings with authorities concerned who have agreed to a high priority.

EXPERIMENTS OF FRUIT SPECIALISTS UNDER IMPERIAL COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH.

489. *Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava: (a) Will the Agriculture Secretary be pleased to state the names of fruits on which experiments have been conducted during the last four years by fruit specialists under the auspices of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research?

(b) Have these experiments succeeded in making fruit squashes? If so, of what fruits?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) A statement is laid on the table showing for each Province the names of the fruits and the nature of the work carried out in connection with them.

(b) Yes, in respect of apples, *falsa*, grapes, *jamans*, lemons, limes, *maltas*, mangoes, passion fruit, peaches, plums and *sangtaras*.

Name of Scheme	Fruits on which work has been carried out	Nature of work
1. Fruit Research, Madras	Orange, acid lime . Mango Sepotas, Pomegranates, guavas, grapes, loquats, figs, jack fruits.	Rootstock trials, progeny tests, variety collections, seeding citrus collections and acid lime pruning trials. Orchard performance in relation to propagational methods, age of rootstocks as a factor in orchard economy, poly-embryonic rootstocks' trial, double working trials, preliminary work on hybridization of mangoes and variety collections. Variety collections.
2. Fruit Research, Bengal	Mango Litchi . Citrus . Guavas Papaya Pineapple . Banana	Varietal trial, propagation experiments, budding, inarching, marcotting and raising seedlings by different methods. Varietal trial and different methods of marcotting. Varietal trial, collection of varieties, wethering, budding and grafting and liming experiment. Varietal trial, pruning and bending to induce higher yield. Varietal trial, planting at different times and transplanting experiment. Varietal trial, hybridisation and experiments to find out best propagation material. Varietal trial, detailed study of successful varieties, preliminary study with a view to hybridisation work.
3. Hill Fruit Research . . .	Apple	Developmental, horticultural, soil chemistry, mycological and entomological.
4. Citrus Rootstock and Grapevine, Punjab.	Malta local, Malta blood, Sangtara local and Marsh grapefruit.	Rootstock investigations and grapevines hybridisation.

Name of Scheme	Fruits on which work has been carried out	Nature of work
5. Manurial Trials on Citrus, Punjab.	Malta, Sangtara, and grape fruit.	Physical and chemical analysis of soil, studying the effect of various fertilisers on citrus, the record of random or individual trees, record of cultural practices, morphological study and physico-chemical analysis.
6. Special Research on Fruit and Vegetable Preservation, Punjab.	Plums, peaches, apricots and pears.	Determination of canning qualities, suitability of black steel plate containers for preserved fruit products, hydrogen swells, preparation of fruit juice concentrates, analysis of fruit and vegetable products prepared under Agmark scheme and advisory work.
7. Fruit and Vegetable Preservation, Punjab.	Malta, lemon, sour lime, <i>sangtra</i> , <i>falea</i> , <i>jaman</i> , apple, grape, passion fruit, mango, plum and tomato.	Standardisation of the methods of preparation and preservation of various fruit and vegetable products like juices, squashes, cordials and concentrates.
	Pear, mango, grape, peas and green gram.	Preparation of canned and bottled products.
	Plum, pear, guava and citrus fruits.	Preparation of jams, jellies and marmalades.
	Tomato, mango, waste apple and dates.	Preparation of chutneys, ketchup and vinegar.
	Malta, lemon and galgal.	Preparation of citric acid, alkali citrates, essential oils and pectin.
8. Fruit Research, Bihar	Orange and <i>bars</i>	Preparation of candy.
	Mango	Relation of flowering to cropping, effect of flowering on manuring and ringir variety breeding, stock action relationship and dwarfing stock, propagation, nutrition, potenture, manuring, rejuvenation and renovation of orchard.
9. Citrus Fruit Scheme, C. P.	Papaya	Breeding.
	Citrus	Survey of existing orchard root-stock, citrus collection, manuring, irrigational investigations, pruning and training investigations, root-pruning and inter-cropping with vegetables.
10. Horticulture Research, N.-W.F.P.	Peach, plum, pear, apricot and grape.	Introduction and selection of varieties, irrigation requirements, of peach trees, nutritive requirements of peach and standardisation of the pruning system for peaches.
11. Citrus Fruit, Assam	Citrus	Collection and classification, planting of seedling progenies, budding, indigenous stock trial experiment, co-operative stock trial experiment, manurial experiment with Khasi orange trees and performance records.

Name of Scheme	Fruits on which work has been carried out.	Nature of work
12. Citrus fruit research, Orissa.	Citrus .	Root-stock trial for santra orange trial of exotic citrus varieties, manurial and irrigational trials.
13. Fruit res., Hyderabad .	Custard apple	Classification of varieties, Preliminary observation, Test for different varieties, propagation methods, trials for evolving a seedless variety, utilisation of the surplus produce, cultural operations and study of the different kinds of Annonas.
	Grapes	Classification of local varieties, comparison of different varieties, pruning, trellising and control of insect pests and diseases.
14. Fruit research, Mysore .	Apple .	Stock trial, varietal, trial, combined manurial and irrigation experiment, pollination experiment, root study, thinning experiments and keeping quality.
	Pineapple .	Combined manurial and varietal trial, introduction and multiplication of new varieties preparatory to statistical trial.
	Figs .	Varietal trial.
	Peach .	Study of the varieties Saharanpur, Indore and Bangalore and introduction of Quetta and Peshawar varieties.
	Papaya .	Seedlings from selected varieties have been raised for planting and papain extraction.
	Guavas .	Observations on the yield, colour, size of Safeda, Seedless, Benares, Allahabad and Bangalore.
	Litchi .	Varietal trial of Early and Late Bedara and Rose Scented.
	Avocado	Observation on the maturity and yield of Trap, Pollock, Dutton and Lyon.
15. Orange .	Orange	Marketing survey, investigations into packing of oranges, organising a co-operative marketing society, marketing arrangements for disposal of fruits, grading under the Agmark, and investigation into cold storage processes.
16. Orange res., Coorg .	Orange . . .	Observation on diseases and pests, cultural and manurial treatment, inter-cropping, shade and pruning and nursery yield recording of promising trees.
17. Citrus grading, Madras .	Orange . . .	Grading of oranges.

Name of Scheme	Fruits on which work has been carried out	Nature of work
18. Canning and fruit preserving, Quetta.	Apricots, plums, peaches, grapes, melons, apples, peas, tomatoes, cherries, fruit salad dates, pimentoes.	Canning experiments.
	Peach	Preparation of squash.
	Mulberry, plum, apricot, pomegranate, grape and date.	Preparation of syrup.
	Pomegranate, grape	Preparation of juice.
	Melon, grape, apple	Preparation of jams and jellies.
	Plums, grapes, peas, tomatoes.	Drying.
	Grapes and raisins	Fermentation studies.
	Tomatoes	Preparation of ketchup, sauce, soup, puree and juice.
19. Citrus Die-back, Bombay .	} Citrus	To survey and classify citrus 'Die-back' found in Peninsula, India, C. P., and Orissa, to estimate the damage due to each of these diseases, and to make observations on the conditions under which these diseases occur.
20. Citrus Die-back, C. P.		
21. Mango Necrosis, Lucknow University.	Mango	Survey. Injunction experiments to produce necrosis artificially, histopathology and chemical studies.
22. San Jose Scale and Woolly aphis, Kashmir.	Apple, cherry and plum	Ecological, life history, control measures, varietal susceptibility and fumigation.
23. Cytogenetics of mango and bananas, Calcutta University.	Mango	Cytological observations, pollen analysis and morphological and cytological observations.
	Banana	Cytological examination of representative species, pollen analysis and the viability of pollen grains of different varieties to be compared.

ANALYSIS OF CONSTITUENTS OF PRESS ADVERTISED MEDICINES

490. *Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava: Will the Health Secretary kindly state if there was or is at present an arrangement with or under the Government of India to analyse the constituents of press advertised medicines prepared according to different indigenous systems of treatment in India? If not, do Government propose, in the public interest, to make such arrangements?

Mr. S. H. Y. Oulsnam: The answer to the first part is in the negative. As regards the second part it is understood that there are no scientific standards for such medicines and analysis would therefore serve no purpose.

NUMBER OF HOSPITALS IN CENTRALLY ADMINISTERED AREAS

491. *Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava: Will the Health Secretary please state the number of Government and Government aided hospitals in the Centrally Administered Areas having library arrangements for their indoor patients?

Mr. S. H. Y. Oulsnam: The two Government hospitals in Coorg have small libraries for indoor patients. There are no libraries in the Government and Government aided hospitals in Delhi and Ajmer-Merwara. Information regarding Baluchistan has been called for and will be laid on the table of the house when received.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS IN CENTRALLY ADMINISTERED AREAS

492. *Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava: Will the Health Secretary be pleased to state the number of Government, Government aided and Municipal Schools where students were examined for health in the Centrally Administered Areas during the year 1945 by qualified medical men as well as the number of such schools where such examination did not take place?

Dr. John Sargent: With your permission, Sir, I will answer this question.

The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

PRIVATE CANDIDATES FOR M.A. EXAMINATION OF DELHI UNIVERSITY

493. *Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava: (a) Will the Education Secretary be pleased to state if it is a fact that only teachers, lawyers and librarians are authorised to go up as private candidates for the M.A. examination of the Delhi University?

(b) If the reply to (a) is in the affirmative, will Government kindly state the reasons why others are debarred from doing so?

Dr. John Sargent: (a) The only persons permitted to appear as private candidates at the M.A. Examination of Delhi University are teachers who fulfil certain conditions and women who are prevented by Social Custom or domestic circumstances from becoming members of one of the Colleges of the University.

(b) Delhi University is a teaching University and not merely an examining body. Therefore a course of study at the University is a condition precedent for all candidates for University examinations. Exception is made only in the case of teachers in order to enable them to improve their academic qualifications since they have generally remained in close touch with the subject of their study before they take the examination, and, in the case of women who, for the reasons mentioned in my reply to part (a) of the question are unable to become regular students at a College. The latter, are, however, required to become members of the Non-Collegiate Women's Delegacy established by the University for the purpose.

PUBLICATION OF REPORTS ON CERTAIN PRODUCTS IN VERNACULAR

494. *Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava: (a) Will the Agriculture Secretary kindly state if the various reports on food, milk, hides and other matters published by his Department are published in English only, or they are also published in different vernaculars for the benefit of the public of the various Provinces?

(b) If the answer is that they are published in the English language only, do Government propose to consider the advisability of publishing the same in the vernaculars?

Sir Pheroze Kharegat: (a) Marketing survey reports (to which presumably the question refers) are published only in English. But abridged editions of some of these reports have been published in the vernacular *viz.* those on wheat and eggs have been published in Urdu and Hindi and those on linseed in Urdu, Hindi, Bengali and Marathi. Provincial Governments have also been requested to consider the advisability of translating these abridged reports into the local languages.

(b) A small staff for translating reports into Urdu and Hindi has now been appointed; the work of publishing reports in other languages will be left to Provincial Governments.

UTILISATION OF TEMPORARY BUILDING IN NEW DELHI

495. *Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) if all the temporary buildings, built for the War Department and other requirements including the returned American buildings on Queensway and other places are going to be utilized solely for office accommodation;

(b) if he will consider the desirability of using at least some of these buildings for housing the Government of India personnel, single persons or others, after making slight modifications in those buildings for residential purposes, and thus relieving the present housing shortage in Delhi; and

(c) whether, if Government is not prepared to undergo the necessary expense, he will let these buildings out on contract with the stipulation that they should be let out to the Government servants in the first instance?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) No.

(b) Yes—if and when any temporary buildings constructed for office purposes are no longer required as offices—and the sites on which they are constructed are not required for other purposes.

(c) This will be considered, but it is likely that Government will require the buildings for their own staff and in such case be likely to keep them under Government control.

REFUSAL OF PERMISSION TO MRS. TILAK TO ENTER INDIA

496. *Seth Govind Das: (a) Will the Secretary for Commonwealth Relations be pleased to state if it is a fact that one, Mrs. Tilak, who is now in Rangoon, has been refused permission by the Government of India to enter India? If so, why?

(b) Do Government now propose to re-consider their decision in this matter, in view of the fact that her husband, Mr. Tilak, has been recently released?

Mr. R. N. Banerjee: (a) No. The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the reply given by me to short notice question by Sri R. V. Reddiar, on the 14th February 1946.

(b) Does not arise.

INDIA'S CLAIM FOR CANADA'S EXPORTABLE SURPLUS WHEAT

497. *Seth Govind Das: Will the Food Secretary be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of India are aware of the news by the A. P. of America, dated the 7th February, 1946, from Ottawa, that Canada is likely to have a large exportable surplus of wheat;

(b) whether Government are also aware of the statement that the surplus would be more than the minimum requirements of the United Kingdom;

(c) whether the Government of India are also aware that India's claims are more urgent than those of the United Kingdom; and

(d) if the answers to (a) to (c) are in the affirmative, what steps the Government of India propose to take in regard to establishing our claims and getting the maximum benefit out of the surplus wheat available from Canada?

Mr. B. R. Sen: (a) and (b). Yes.

(c) The statement that Canada's wheat surplus would be more than the minimum requirements of the United Kingdom merely denotes the extent of the surplus and does not imply that the United Kingdom's requirements will be the first charge on that surplus.

(d) The Government of India are taking all possible steps to impress India's need for the import of foodgrains on the London Food Council and the Combined Food Board, Washington.

STEPS TAKEN TO PROCURE WHEAT SUPPLY FROM AUSTRALIA

498. *Seth Govind Das: (a) Is the Food Secretary aware of the despatch of an urgent telegram from the British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, to the Australian Premier, appealing for increased export of foodstuffs from Australia to England?

(b) Whether the Government of India have taken any steps to approach Australia for wheat supply?

(c) If they have not already done so, what steps they propose to take to obtain wheat from Australia?

Mr. B. R. Sen: (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). As all food surpluses are to be offered to and allocated by the Combined Food Board, Washington, the Government of India have placed their demands on the Board through the London Food Council. The Indian High Commissioner is in contact with the Australian Government to expedite despatches.

GOVERNMENT'S POLICY *re* MICA TRADE

499. *Babu Ram Narayan Singh: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) the policy and object of Government in regulating the Mica business and trade;

(b) the probable date by which the report of the Mica Enquiry Committee is to be printed and published; and

(c) the length of time to be taken by Government in considering the desirability of altogether removing or at least modifying the ban on the sale of Crude and Bina Mica under the Mica Control Order?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The Government of India wish to improve the working conditions in the industry and to organise it on sound commercial lines so that Indian mica gets a fair price in the market.

(b) The report is under print and will be published as soon as printed copies are available.

(c) It is not possible to fix any date by which Government will take decisions on the recommendations of the Mica Enquiry Committee. Every endeavour will be made to do it as quickly as possible.

UNEMPLOYMENT DUE TO MICA CONTROL ORDER

500. *Babu Ram Narayan Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether Government are aware that several lakhs of people in the Hazaribagh District have been thrown out of employment as a result of the introduction of the Mica Control Order?

(b) Are Government aware that several lakhs of people of the Hazaribagh District have Mica business as their only means of livelihood? If so, do Government propose to regulate the Mica business and the Mica Trade so as to safeguard their interests?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The Government of India have no information that the introduction of the Mica Control Order has resulted the unemployment of several lakhs of people in the Hazaribagh District.

(b) Government are aware that a large number of people are engaged in the Mica business and in any scheme of improvement of the industry Government hope that their interests will not be ignored.

APPOINTMENT OF ECONOMIC ADVISER

501. *Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state:

(a) for what period the Economic Adviser was appointed;

(b) when it is likely to come to an end;

(c) whether any steps are being taken to secure the services of an Indian economist to take his place when he goes to England, or whether Government are contemplating the extension of the term of the present Economic Adviser; and

(d) whether Government are aware of the censure motion passed by the Assembly when he was appointed?

The Honourable Dr. Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) The present Economic Adviser was originally appointed with effect from the 18th January 1938 for a period of 5 years, which has since been extended by 4 years.

(b) On the 12th January, 1947.

(c) The question of the appointment of a successor to the present Economic Adviser has not yet been taken up.

(d) Yes, Sir.

INDIAN OILSEEDS COMMITTEE BILL

PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE

Sir Pheroze Kharegat (Secretary: Agriculture Department): Sir, I present the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill to provide for the creation of a fund to be expended by a Committee specially constituted for the improvement and development of the cultivation and marketing of oilseeds and of the production, manufacture and marketing of oilseeds products.

THE RAILWAY BUDGET—LIST OF DEMANDS—*contd.*

SECOND STAGE—*contd.*

DEMAND NO. 1—RAILWAY BOARD—*contd.*

Financial position and policy of Railways

Mr. President: We now proceed with the cut motions. Prof. Ranga.

(The Honourable Member was not in his seat)

Pandit Thakurdas Bhargava.

(The Honourable Member was not in his seat but at this stage Prof. N. G. Ranga came into the Chamber.)

Mr. President: Prof. Ranga.

Prof. N. G. Ranga (Guntur *cum* Nellore Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I move:

"That the demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer (Bombay Southern Division: Muhammadan Rural): May I ask, Sir, whether this principle will also apply when asking questions? Supposing an Honourable Member is absent when his name is called and approaches you later that he should be allowed to put his questions?

Mr. President: I have understood the Honourable Member's point. The principle will not apply. I am applying it here because the parties have arranged by mutual agreement that out of so many cut motions, only particular cut motions should be placed before the House; and as on this question there has been agreement between parties and the parties wish that these motions should be moved, I have called on the Honourable Member. The principle not apply even to other motions.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Sir, my Honourable friend Sir Edward Benthall has posed a very important question the other day. He perhaps thought that it would prove extremely inconvenient to those of us who have been championing the cause of the third class passengers on the one side and of labour on the other. He seems to be under the impression that we do not want to raise or allow the Government to raise the general freights and rates because we will not be able to raise the general scale of wages and salaries and allowances that are being paid to labour employed on railways. To that my honourable friend Mr. Guruswami has already given his answer. He has indeed challenged the Railway Board to hand over the administration of the railways to railwaymen in order to prove that it will be possible for them to run the railway administration in such a manner that, without raising these freights and rates, it will be possible for them to assure the workers a better standard

of living and higher scales of wages and dearness allowances. If the Government doubts the feasibility of this challenge, then it is for them to accept it and then try and see. There is already a precedent there in Mexico. I think there was a precedent in Australia also. But I would like to add just one amendment to that. There is an experiment being made in Soviet Russia in regard to the control of industries. They have what is known as triangular control of industries—a tripartite control—that is, between the managers or the railway administration, the workers themselves or their trade unions, and lastly the Government or the community as a whole. All these three come into partnership in the administration of railways and in various state enterprises in Soviet Russia. Allow such an experiment on those lines here. If the Government are not prepared to hand over the railways to the workers alone employed therein—let them hand it over to this kind of tripartite management that I have suggested. Let us make this experiment for three or five years. By making this experiment the Government will not be running any greater risk than they had run owing to their own mismanagement and various other defects in the railway administration during the economic depression when the railways had to go through a very bad time indeed. . . .

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall (Member for Railways and War Transport): The Honourable Member is giving the considered view of his party?

Prof. N. G. Ranga: So far as I can understand it, I think that is the view—tripartite management of the railway workers the technical staff, and the management, and the community as a whole. . . .

Diwan Chaman Lall (West Punjab: Non-Muhammadan): Certainly.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Then I come to the other point. How can you save money on the railways? Several suggestions were made by the Wedgwood Committee. I am not in agreement with most of those suggestions, but with some of them I agree, so far as the possibilities for economising expenditure on railways are concerned. For instance, they suggest one thing. This Government had wasted too much money on too lavish a scale on their capital expenditure in the past on railways and in future they would have to be extremely careful about it.

Secondly I suggest what my Honourable friend Mr. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar has already hinted at when he said that there should be Indianisation of the railway machinery. I suggest that in India itself Government should try to manufacture all the tools, wagons and locomotives and all the rest of the machinery that we want, in order to make India independent of the rest of the world in regard to its railway industries and also to economise our total expenditure thereon.

Thirdly, the scales of the higher salaries that have been paid to various officers on railways are too high in this country. For a very long time we have been asking for a reduction in their salaries and in their too sumptuous allowances also. This must be looked into. If you examine in this and various other directions it must be possible for the Railways to find lot of funds.

Coming to the other problem of the sinking fund, depreciation fund and amortization and so on, I do admit that the time has come when the whole question should be looked into very carefully by a competent authority aided by non-official public opinion in this country. There was at one time an arbitrary figure fixed upon—one-sixtieth—had to be contributed to the depreciation fund. There were very many experts who would not agree. Yet we had to carry on with that proportion for the time being. I think it is time that it should also be examined. Recently the Government has been spending more and more for certain aspects of capital expenditure also from out of their current revenues. Generally speaking I am not opposed to that procedure but this may militate against the demands of the passengers and the traffic also for better facilities and also the demands of the workers for better dearness allowances and wages and salaries. This also has got to be examined very carefully. Moreover if you go on doing this, adding to your capital-at-charge, the total amount of interest that

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you have got to set apart will be increasing and even your contribution to amortization in future may go on increasing to an enormous degree which may not be quite economical.

There is also the additional point as to how much is to be contributed to general revenues, whether anything is to be contributed or nothing at all. I am not willing, nor is my party, to accept the proposition that these State industries ought not to make any contribution to the general revenues. We are anxious that the social sectors of our industries should go on increasing and in future it will be difficult for the State to find ways and means to finance them. Therefore we are in favour of a certain amount of contribution to be given by these various State industries that have to be established in this country or that are here already and the Railways today are the biggest State industry in this country. The country has already invested in it more than 900 crores. It is but natural for the country as a whole to expect an adequate, reasonable and minimum contribution from the Railways but these contributions ought not to encroach upon the immediate conveniences that have to be provided for the passengers and the users of the railways and more especially the working classes who are employed on the Railways. It is here we reach a point wherein there is scope for difference of opinion—whether this one per cent of the capital at charge that has been decided upon in the past is to be the minimum or the maximum contribution that the Railways ought to make to the general revenues. There are some like me who would like to make it the minimum contribution to be made but there are some others who would like to see it made the maximum contribution to general revenues. This is a very important question and a very general question on which I will not want this Government to come to any decision. I would like them to wait till a National Government comes and takes charge of the whole situation, studies the whole question of the provision of amenities for the users of the Railways on the one side and the workers on the other before it comes to any definite decision in regard to this matter but for the time being we are anxious that this one per cent contribution should be continued and must be continued and no steps should be taken by this Government by way of an inquiry committee, or any other means, to try to reopen this particular question itself. It is open to them to ask any committee to investigate whether it should be increased, but not whether it should be decreased.

I come now to the question of freight rates and fares. I am not at all in favour of increasing them, and why? The Wedgwood Committee also says so. Our people are very poor. My Honourable friend Sardar Sampuran Singh was stating this point in his own way. Our people are too poor, the users of the railways as well as the general public also. Today we are able to provide better amenities and better allowances and better salaries for our railway workers than what is possible for our agricultural masses and even some other classes of industrial workers. We do not grudge this. We do not mind even increasing the facilities for these railway workers but at the same time we do not want them to go on claiming a greater share of our total national wealth than what can possibly be justified by their contribution to the society as a whole. Yes, let them become more and more efficient and let them claim more and more, but today we are not satisfied with the efficiency placed by them at the disposal of the country. At the same time this should not form an isolated group divorced from the general standard of living that obtains in other sectors of our society, in such a manner that there will be too much of a rush for this particular sector and there will be too much of competition between these workers and other workers and that way there will be a terrible lot of trouble hereafter.

By this, I am not going to justify the present attitude of the Railway Administration in their maintaining these absurd new scales of pay. Nor do I want the Government to feel encouraged in their present policy of pitching the railway workers as against other workers and saying that because the railway

workers here are getting a little more than others they are not going to make any more contribution. There is an important consideration in this regard and that is this. If Railway workers got a little more than others that may be, as my friend Mr. Anthony put it, a sort of spearhead for all other workers to try to raise their own standard of life in their own respective industries and this may force various other industries to raise their own level of efficiency in the matter of administration and management and thus make it possible for larger and larger classes of our workers to gain higher levels of wages and greater standards of living. So, my caution is that wages and salaries on the railways ought not to be allowed to encroach upon the contribution that the railways have to make to the general revenues or the amenities that they have to make available to the general public. I ought not to be understood to mean that we are opposed to the present demands of the railwaymen in regard to retrenchment and in regard to the abolition of these different scales of pay that prevail today on the railways and other difficulties also. If there is any doubt on this, then there is the solution offered by my Honourable friend Mr. Gadgil that the whole question in regard to labour be placed before a competent tribunal for adjudication. We are prepared as a party to accept its verdict. The Honourable Member has told us that we are going to constitute a new Government within two months. Even then we are prepared to accept the decision of such a tribunal. Let the Government be willing to accept this challenge and place the workers' case before this tribunal. With these remarks I move my motion.

Mr. President: Cut motion moved:

"That the demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Mr. A. C. Turner (Government of India: Nominated Official): Sir, I will endeavour to touch on a few of the fresh points which have been raised by my Honourable friend Professor Ranga. The first point I would mention is his anxiety about our capital expenditure. I am very glad, indeed, to see that he realises the importance of this because we on this side of the House fully share that anxiety. This will be evidenced by the action which we have taken to safeguard our capital at charge in regard to the purchases which have had to be made during the war at very high prices. We evolved a special procedure which was fully explained to this House last year, and that has safeguarded both our capital at charge and also it has safeguarded our Depreciation Reserve Fund, as, I think, Prof. Ranga would admit. He then touched upon the question of self-sufficiency in India for the railways. Well, Sir, that is Government's policy and it is being implemented as rapidly as circumstances will permit. Another point mentioned was that certain salaries in the railways are too high. Well, that may be, although I am personally very doubtful about it. But I would point out that the total pay bill of those who draw Rs. 1,000 a month and over on the railways works out to, I think, approximately 2 per cent. of the total wage bill, so that if you make all the cuts that you possibly can in these rates, I am afraid you are not going to solve the problem to any great extent.

As regards the contribution to the Depreciation Reserve Fund, it has been fixed at 1/60th. That figure is not quite so arbitrary as Prof. Ranga seems to think. Originally, the amount of depreciation was based on the lives of assets and was calculated separately for the various classes of assets. After that had been going on for some time, it was decided to simplify the procedure and 1/60th was the approximate fraction which the total amount so calculated averaged out to in the previous years came to in regard to the capital at charge. It was, therefore, on this basis that 1/60th was adopted. I may say that this matter is being investigated again and the first step we have taken is to investigate the data which are available on the various railways in order to ascertain whether the lives which we had previously adopted still hold good for the present equipment and present conditions. Some of this data has been received from railways and more data is coming in from other railways. This matter is under examination in the Board's office and will be fully considered during

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the course of the next year. It is hoped that we will be able to give this House a fuller idea as to the conclusions of Government before the time of the presentation of the next Budget.

As regards the question of the 1 per cent. contribution, that is, as the House is aware, a feature of the convention which is at present under suspension. At present each year the amount of the contribution to general revenues is decided *ad hoc*, and for this year the House has seen that the 1 per cent. does figure in the calculations. The question as to whether the figure for the contribution should be 1 per cent. or 2 per cent. and as to whether, if the profits exceed a certain figure, the Central revenues should share in the excess are matters which will, of course, have to be considered by the Committee which will consider the revision of the Convention. In that connection, the Leader of the House, when replying to Mr. Neogy's cut motion last Friday, accepted on behalf of Government the principle that a Committee or Committees would be inevitable. Those Committees will be constituted in due course and the question at issue is really the timing of the setting up of such a Committee or Committees. I may assure the House that the Railway Board are seized of all these matters and have already started on the spade-work which will have to be completed before any Committee can start effective work. In view of this, I trust, the Honourable Mover will not wish to press his cut motion.

Shri D. P. Karmarkar (Bombay Southern Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I rise to support this cut motion. My Honourable friend, while presenting the Budget, told us that this will be his last Budget. In view of that fact any detailed discussion of facts and figures might perhaps have very little interest for him personally. It is very likely that though he may cease to be a Member for Railways in this Government, in view of his eminent qualifications the succeeding Government may also like to have him in their service.

Shri Sri Prakasa (Benares and Gorakhpur Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Don't quit India!

Shri D. P. Karmarkar: There will be a few men belonging to other nations who may not have to quit India and I am hoping that the Leader of the House may be one of them, because one thing that I have noted about him is that in his nature there is loyalty to Government. Hence, when he serves the Government that is to be, I am sure he will be loyal to that Government also.

Now, Sir, instead of diving into the facts and figures of all such things to which the other speakers have referred and to which they have done full justice, I will broadly review the present-budget proposals. The first thing that he has said about the working of the railways last year is that owing to the exigencies of the war, all the available resources were put at the disposal of the army and others responsible for producing war-like equipment. Now, if there has been one factor which has disturbed us and which is absolutely against the popular interest so far as the present railway system and the railway administration is concerned, it is this that the railways have all along been made a handmaid to the military purposes. In fact, that was the original aspect of the railways when they were founded and it was made clear by one of Lord Dalhousie's very pertinent points which he made at that time. He said:

"It cannot be necessary for me to insist upon the importance of a speedy and wide introduction of railway communication throughout the length and breadth of India. A single glance cast upon the map recalling to mind the vast extent of the Empire we hold; the various classes and interests it includes, the wide distances which separate the several points at which hostile attacks may at any time be expected; the perpetual risk of such hostility appearing in quarters where it is least expected; the expenditure of time, of money and of life that are involved in even the ordinary routine of military movements, would convince the urgency of speedy communications."

Even now, up to the present time, the relevancy of the railways so far as the present Government is concerned, lies more in its speed to take troops to other places where they want to quell popular movements rather than in catering to the popular needs in the shape of bringing more food stuffs and so on.

In view of that fact, the whole system of railway finance has been vitiated by this predominant consideration which goes against the root of the popular weal. In view of that fact, we are not surprised to find him yet lingering and halting so far as the comforts of third class passengers are concerned. It is just like promising to a man who is dying of hunger now that he will be given a hearty meal tomorrow, so that he may linger on for another day simply with a hope to taste the food that is promised. Similar is his promise for the third class passengers. He has promised that next year or the year thereafter—exact time not specified—third class passengers will have some room to sleep and this vague promise might be a sufficient compensation in his view for those of us who have been spending sleepless nights for days and days on the railways. But that is a very poor consolation indeed. What I am complaining about is not the problem of convenience or inconvenience, but the whole perspective, I am charging that the whole perspective is wrong. The point of fact is this, that railway services ought primarily and properly be social service. The first question that any railway administration should ask itself if it is going to be adjudged a financial success is this: how much satisfaction have I given to my customer? Even now, the Railway Member says that the higher classes of travellers have given more than they gave last year. We do often speak of third class passengers as lower class passengers, or as the masses. The railway administration thinks that third class passengers and the masses are equivalent terms. It is thought that higher class passengers alone count for the railway administration. May I ask for whom are these railways primarily meant? Are they meant only for people who travel in higher classes? These gentlemen who draw fat salaries talk of higher classes. The big merchants who travel in higher classes are making money at the expense of the poorer classes. Is it for these classes of people that the railways are primarily meant or are they meant for the so called lower classes of people, the masses of people. I submit the interest of the masses must be the predominant claim on the railways. If there is any meaning in classifying railways as State railways, they must be primarily meant for the large majority of people in the State. When speaking of third class passengers, let us not forget one who has most identified himself with third class passengers, namely, the eminent Mahatma Gandhi. Whenever we talk of third class passengers, let us not simply talk in a patronising way about people who cannot afford to pay more, but let us talk about the third class passengers in the same spirit as we talk of the nation. What is the comfort, what is the convenience and what is the happiness that our Honourable friend's railway system confers on the poor third class passengers? Nothing. People standing on footboards of compartments, people, as many as 30, 40 or even 80 finding accommodation in a compartment meant for 20. People crowding together. All the existing woes of third class passengers were there before a Committee which sat on the question of railways more than 25 years ago. The grievances which we find today were all there in those days also. Overcrowding to the extent of double, and sometimes treble the number of carrying capacity, inaccessability, insanitary, dirty condition of third class carriages, inadequate waiting halls for third class passengers, inadequate food arrangements on the platform, inconvenient booking facilities—all these grievances have been existing from a long time past, and today there is an additional discomfort, namely that latrines are too small on some railways. An Honourable Member has observed that some of the Honourable Members of this House will find it a great job to get into any one of these latrines and come back without getting suffocated. This is an additional grievance which has come recently into existence, after this committee was appointed. The question of financial solvency or otherwise of any commercial concern can only be judged by the satisfaction it gives to its customers who are paying for it.

The next point I wish to touch upon is this. We dabble in these huge figures, we say railway reserves have doubled during the year, that we have paid our debts, that we have paid more to the general revenues, that the financial condition of railways generally is much better than it was before the

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war commenced and so on. I submit a statement like that is a bit fallacious. When we consider this financial question we seem to fail to take notice of one thing, namely the value of human capital. That is much more important than all the financial resources of any country. If we could only invent a mathematical machine which could calculate in terms of rupees, annas and pies the loss involved for a nation in its discomfort and inconvenience, in the positive nuisance suffered by the nation during the last five years, I am sure this mathematical equivalent result would far outweigh the so called advantages we have got in the railway budget. In our present railway administration, there is a complete absence of this human point of view, and now that it is said that this railway administration with its assets is to be handed over to the future Government to come, what are we really in for? We are going to get some rotten engines, old wagons, worn out lines and so on. According to their own admission, we are going to bequeath a good will which is not worth anything at all in positive terms, if at all it is equivalent to a minus wealth. It is minus, 100 per cent. or even 200 per cent. or something like that. This sort of good will is absolutely no good.

Another pattern of good will which the railway administration is bequeathing to the future government may be seen in the proposals of road-rail co-ordination and the scant courtesy which the Honourable Member for Railways has shown to the interest of the people. It would be interesting to trace the origin of this road-rail co-ordination proposal. This was brought before us as a question necessary for carrying on various services, that is from the point of view of the nation. That is a point of view which certainly appeals to us. But how did it originate? The whole proposal originated at a time when railways were running in competition with buses, when railways were making a loss of two crores a year and later on the loss increased to 4½ crores a year. Then the railways came in and wanted to have a commanding interest first, then a dominating interest afterwards, which my Honourable friend defined as something between 5 to 40 per cent. With regard to the proposal itself, many of us were diffident to work it out in view of the fact that the Government at the Centre as well as in the Provinces were governments which were not responsible to the people. That speaks very little of the credit of good will which the railways possess in the eyes of the nation or the country at large. If under the circumstances, owing to jugglery of figures a few figures are piled up, or there is a bit increase in reserves it is because the railway administration has starved the people of their comforts and conveniences which it was their legitimate duty to attend to. Under the circumstances, I cannot congratulate the Railway Member for his achievement during the war period. I am just now forgetting for the moment what huge sums have been spent on utilising the railway resources for a war which was not ours. Apart from that fact, the point I was labouring was this that the railways have to work primarily in the interest of the people and the State as a whole. Wherever we have that point of view clearly in our mind, all other things follow as a logical corollary. There would be no workers strikes, the workers of railways being part of the nation will be looked after well and if in the interest of the State the railway workers are required to make a sacrifice in their wages by wage cut and so on, they will readily agree to it, in common with other servants of the State. In an emergency, the workers in England agreed to a proposal for reduction in their salaries. Similarly, in India also I am sure that the railway workers would willingly share the sufferings if such a sacrifice is in the interest of the nation, if such proposals emanate from people who are responsible to the people having at heart the good of the people at large. From that point of view the present railway budget like many of its predecessors presents to us a spectacle of a financial condition which though ostensibly very well looking, is at its bottom a very cankerous one which is not suitable to be handed over to any future national government that is going to come. In fact, Sir, many of us on this side of the House are diffident about the future national government. Whenever we on this side ventilate the grievances of third class

passengers, when we refer to the suffocation experienced by people in railway carriages, or whenever we draw attention of the Government to the shooting of innocent people in Bombay, the Honourable Members on the Treasury Benches always come out with their pet slogan, 'national government is coming at an early date'. In any case, come it must. Though not this year then the year after, or in the immediate future, quit also they must. But, Sir, when they quit, I would appeal to them, though it is not this year, they should try to reform themselves in a manner which has not been there during the last six years and they should present to us a cleaner slate than they are presenting to us now, and give us not a railway surplus, but happiness and contentment among the people and let it for once be told by the people in India that for once during the years of their administration, the railways have given us a service which is satisfactory to the people on the whole. That is all I have to submit.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar (Madras Ceded Districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I would not have intervened in this debate but for the fact that I have been a member of the Standing Finance Committee for some time, and I feel that I should say a few words with regard to the financial aspect. The Honourable Member for Transport asked my Honourable friend Prof. Ranga, as regard the management of this asset, whether it is the considered opinion of the party that it must be managed by the workers, by the people at large and the Government, all together. That issue does not arise at all under this cut. As regards management so as to contribute to the efficiency of the administration, my Honourable friend suggested that the workers should not be taken as ordinary chattel not having any interest in the administration nor even the people who travel as passengers; but surely all these interests must be considered. In the future administration, if it is handed over to the people of this country there will be councils and the Government will be there to safeguard the interests of all the people concerned. I therefore proceed to the financial aspect of this.

Again and again we have been hearing that the sole intent of this Government is to run it as a commercial concern. But they have not been doing it; they have only been showing lip sympathy to the commercial aspect of it. If really it had been run as a commercial concern, would they try to have a monopoly even with respect to rates and stifle the buses that ply on the roads, instead of running the trains remuneratively, making the service more profitable for passengers and more attractive for them by reducing rates and fares and not compete with the buses that ply on the roads? They are trying to have a monopoly in that branch also. That is damaging to the administration. No other index is necessary to show that the administration is not running properly or on a commercial basis at all.

Now let us see the earnings. There is still a debt of 800 crores. Has any attempt been made to discharge this debt at the rate of at least 5 crores a year? Where is the amortisation fund? If it is a commercial concern should we not reduce the working expenses? The working expenses take away the entire money; and then the third-class passenger comes as a mendicant. Is he not the man who keeps the administration going? Is he not entitled to say, "I am not going to enter your coach unless you provide all the conveniences for me"? Is it a commercial concern? Is it open to a bus-owner to say, "Well, I have a monopoly; you come and beg of me for a seat, but you must pay the rates and fares that I demand"? No concern would work like that. Is it open to a trader to say, "I will sell you a cap for which you must give me four rupees, but it will be a very dirty cap"? Is it a commercial concern? It is not a question of amenities. You are unnecessarily charging high fares and rates in order to feed a top-heavy administration and you are starving the poor classes, the hands and feet that are actually running the administration.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Sir, may I put the Honourable Member a question? If he thinks 2 per cent. is top-heavy for the administration, what figure does he think is fair?

Prof. N. G. Ranga: There are industries whose percentage is much lower.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: One-fourth is the higher administration, and if one-fourth gets 2 per cent., to the exclusion of 99½, my Honourable friend can work out the percentage himself. But then it sets a very bad example. If the top man gets Rs. 5,000 will it be converted into wheat or rice or whatever he may eat and all the rest that he is able to purchase? When it comes to the salary of underdogs, you calculate it and it comes to 58 crores and you say it is an appalling figure and the administration cannot be run. I would say that this ought not to be the case. There should not be a difference of more than ten times between the lowest and highest salaries. It is not a good financial proposition. I do not say of course that I am going to be poor or the railway administration is going to be poor merely because the men at the top are getting five or six thousand rupees. But it is wrong in principle. They do not work more than 5, 6 or 10 hours a day—just like the others. Why should he set a higher value on his work than is put upon the work of the other people there, who are toiling night and day, who have a larger family to maintain? Therefore even from the commercial point of view the administration is not being run properly. The debt is there, there is no amortisation fund, the working expenses have not been reduced.

Then let me come to the interest charges. In the Imperial Bank of India there are crores and crores of demand liabilities on which there is not a pie paid by way of interest. Money is cheap in the market on account of inflation and people are prepared to surrender even one-thousand and ten-thousand rupee notes, lest they should be caught when giving their names. What steps have been taken to reduce the interest charges? My Honourable friend will at once say that it is the business of the Government of India as a whole. But you must reduce the interest charges, so far as it is a commercial concern, and try to raise other loans at favourable rates of interest.

Then let me come to depreciation. My Honourable friend has got a rough and ready method,—one-sixtieth. But may I know what the present value of the assets is? Are they old? Are they new? How long will they serve in a commercial concern? Should not a man know what the present worth of his property is. They have not got any idea. They say that a committee is going to be appointed; but if it is a commercial concern they have done nothing about it.

Lastly, my Honourable friend when desired to increase the salaries of the lower-paid staff, said that for that purpose he must increase the rates, and even by increasing the rates he cannot pay them well. But I submit that unless they are paid properly the administration cannot work. I proceed on this principle. I am not anxious that this asset should contribute to the general revenues at the cost of the underdog who works. If he is starved and the general revenues are going to take money, I say we will get it out of the sweat of the poor man who works there. In the first place, if it is a commercial concern, do not draw upon the general revenues for maintaining it. Then, if this concern is self-sufficient I will be more than satisfied. Self-sufficiency depends on a good asset, i.e., a proportionate or recurring decrease of the debt upon it, reduction of the working charges, proper payment to the lower grades of workmen, a contented labour force, and good amenities for the travelling public. If after satisfying all this there is not a pie left to the central or general revenues I would not shed a single tear. I say that even a commercial concern ought to be self-supporting in the first instance and it ought not to be at the cost of other amenities and should not detract from the efficacy or the value of it as an asset. I would say that I believe there is an agreement in this side of the House and the general public. The Honourable member need not stretch his hands; I am prepared to take charge of this administration because I am sure I will work it properly. Therefore he need not feel helpless that we cannot manage properly; it will go on even if he quits. What I submit is that these other people have to be paid properly, and let there be not a pie left so far as the general revenues are concerned.

Is this not a public utility concern. What is the object of taking over the management of this asset from the companies to the State. The companies certainly managed them as commercial concerns; their one single purpose was to earn revenue and large profits. We have taken them over. If after nationalising this asset we still pursue the methods of those directors of companies in England, we only substitute ourselves as other directors. If this is all our nationalisation I would not be sorry if these are once again handed over to some other companies like Birla's or Tata's, and instead of a white company have a dark one. If our object is to get money for the general revenues let us hand it over to a private concern and get money. But the very object of nationalising this asset and taking the management over from the companies to the State is to run it as a utility service. This is one of the most important public utility services in this country, and the utility aspect must be emphasised in preference to the profit aspect. In the hands of my Honourable friend and his Board it is neither a commercial concern nor a utility concern; it serves neither God nor the devil. Therefore I ask him to quit as soon as possible. I am not talking politics, but I have tried to address myself purely to the financial aspect. It is neither a commercial concern nor a public utility concern.

So far as rates and fares are concerned, I am not in favour of increasing them at all. The rates are too prohibitive.

Finally, Sir, I have to say a word about coal. My point is that the collieries have not been managed properly. There is a lot of corruption there. Every colliery subordinate has made tons of money; for each ton of coal there is a ton of gold going into his pocket. There is corruption there from the top-most man to the lowest man. As my time is up, I will take another opportunity to stress this point more vehemently and in greater detail.

That is all, Sir, so far as I have to make my submissions on this cut motion.

Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I did not get an opportunity of saying a few words when the general discussion was going on on the Railway Budget, and since you have kindly given me an opportunity of speaking on this motion of Prof. Ranga I will make a few submissions now.

As regards the financial policy of Railways is concerned, I feel that so far as this Government is concerned, and so far as the Railway Department is concerned, they all suffer from one great fallacy and that is, Sir, the fallacy of over-administration. They have built up luxurious offices—whether it is the Imperial Secretariat or a district headquarters—and officers are paid on such high rates and they travel in such large saloons, that they are entirely divorced from those who do the actual work, in their departments. To my mind the worst condemnation of the present Government is that they are in that sense an entirely capitalist Government; that their interests are identical with those of capitalists and aristocrats, but not with those of workers who do the real work. Sir, there has been a great deal of unrest in the Railways and there have been talks of strikes and so on. What is at the bottom of all this? I feel it is this financial policy or rather the administrative policy which the Railways and the Railway Board in this country have adopted.

I want to draw your attention to the vast difference between the living conditions—the wages, environments, and everything else—between railway officials and workers. I will not particularly confine myself to the Railway Board—they sit in the olympic heights of Simla or among the flesh pots of Delhi—but I will speak also of the officer class on the Railways. In the first place, I am convinced that nobody can say that I speak without moderation or that I am in any way an extremist, but, Sir, as a frequent traveller over the Railways and as one who has had something to do with the Railways, I feel that the difference between the conditions of life between officers and subordinates is very great and in fact appalling and unjustifiable.

In the first place the railways are over-staffed with officers. I would like the Honourable Member to examine that position. It is not a new thing that I am

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saying, but it has been urged again and again on the Railway Member that there is a surplus of officers both at headquarters among the Directors, Joint Directors and Deputy Directors, and among district officers on the Railways. I think anybody who knows anything about the Railways will agree with me, and that is the general impression among the officers themselves that they are far too many of the officer class. Then, Sir, take the salaries these people get and the amenities they are provided. They get salaries which are several times the salaries of those who work under them, of subordinates, upper-subordinates, and people in more humble occupations. Then think of the difference in housing. A district railway officer's bungalow in an even small and out of the way place is more a semi palace than anything else. In addition to his large salary, he has now become the new poor—whether his salary is one thousand or fifteen hundred, he has to be given a dearness allowance. In addition to his fine bungalow, he has a whole gang of workmen who are made to work it for nothing. I do not know where they are drawn from—I don't know whether they are porters or linemen, or who they are—but whenever you go to any of these railway officer's bungalow, you will find that he will have about ten men weeding his lawn, and other people doing various other jobs—taking out his children for airings, and so on. I do not envy them; let them have these amenities, and enjoy their life, but there should be some limit to all this.

Take the question of the way they travel about. I am fully sensible of the need that these railway officers should be given some facilities during their tours—they should be afforded protection against heat and cold, and they may travel even in saloons when they are doing long journeys,—but I will ask my Honourable friend if he has seen white saloons in America and England. I have travelled a lot; I have not seen a white saloon put on to the Railway train for the use of a railway officer. He will probably say that the distances in England are short, but are distances in America or on the Continent also short? No, Sir, I have seen on more than one occasion the Honourable Sir Edward Benthall himself discarding the use of a saloon and going in a small coupe—I compliment him on that, but I hope that his good example will be followed by much lesser fry in his own department. The other day when I was coming from Indore to Delhi, we found that one first-class and second-class carriage had been removed and there was no ladies compartment because some petty official insisted on having a white saloon attached to it while he was only doing a day's journey, and probably his journey was not going to extend for more than a few hours. That is the kind of thing which makes the public very critical of the superior and privileged manner in which the railway officers are allowed to go about. And I think, Sir, that such things are at the root of all the trouble between people who are dissatisfied—the upper subordinates, lower subordinates and the people who even clean the platforms and so forth. The difference between their salaries and those of the officers are several-fold, and that, Sir, is never right and that cannot be right today, in the present world, when even Capitalist England is going ultra-socialist.

The one thing that I ask my Honourable friend in the first place is to stop the use of these white saloons for all officers on his railways. Why is it that these saloons should be necessary. If it is necessary, do give him a whole compartment; but why should it be necessary to take off a whole bogey so that a petty officer should travel in a large saloon. There is no justification.

Secondly, I say that the salaries of officers should be levelled down and the salaries of staff should be scaled up, so that the enormous difference in living conditions should disappear, and so that the officer class may be able to realize and sympathise with the way in which these poor workers live. If you make them a privileged class if you give them high salaries, if you give them palatial houses, if you give them other amenities, which place them above all want, they cannot sympathize with people like railwaymen, who live in miserable

quarters, who generally raise very large families, and who have none of these amenities, and therefore feel extremely bitter.

I would also have to say something to my Honourable friend, Mr. Ayyangar, though he is not here. Today it is Benthall's railway, tomorrow it will be Ayyangar's railway and he will have to face the same problems I do not quite agree with him that the Railway should become a concern in which there should be no profit whatsoever, and that it should be a sort of charitable organisation. I am one of those people who always believe that whatever railway has been taken over by the state, it has deteriorated. It has deteriorated in comfort to the passengers, and it has deteriorated in every other sense. However it is no use championing a lost cause, this certainly is completely a lost cause. Railways have been nationalized and they will continue to be so. All the same cannot understand the theory that since the railways have been nationalised the taxpayer should get no return on his capital! A very large

12 Noon. amount of our capital and our money is sunk in these railways. Far be it from me to say that the railways, because they are monopoly railways—since I have to go from one place to another I must travel by any one line—that they should take advantage of that monopoly and charge very high fares or that they should continue to refuse amenities to their lower paid staff. But I do feel that it would be wrong if we make the railways in India a charitable organisation. It will mean that when Mr. Ayyangar takes over the railways he will find that he is placing himself and his department and also the national finances near ruination.

A great deal has been said about the comfort of passengers in the lower classes. My friend, Sri Prakasa, drew my attention to it and I am more than sensible of what happens every day. The state of third class travel is disgraceful. It is no use reiterating the story. The very fact that people are allowed to get into the third class compartments or forced to get into them up to the double or treble of their seating capacity is something which is disgraceful. That has to be remedied. Think of third class travel in England, no one but Lords travel first class and even they now cannot afford it in most cases. No one else thinks of travelling first class. Everybody travels third class and there third class travel is paradise compared to third class travel here. But the fact is that the person who travels third class in England pays very nearly the same fair as the person who travels first class in this country. I am all for improvement of third class travel. I feel that there should be only two classes and not so many distinctions. There should be an upper class and a lower class but the lower class should be really comfortable. But I cannot agree with my friend, Mr. Ayyangar, that we should keep to the same rates and fares and then go on adding amenities. By all means give fans, by all means give them even sleeping accommodation at night which they ought to have and other amenities, but to say that they should never pay a penny more is indefensible. It would mean ruin to the finances of this country if we press that there should be no increase in the fares of third class travel but that amenities should be added.

I should like you to think of another point. You, Sir, have travelled a great deal and so have other Honourable Members. You must have seen that in spite of this war having stopped and military traffic having fallen, still every train is overcrowded. This shows that there must be money in the country making it possible for people today to travel.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: On a point of order. Is not my honourable friend speaking on the next cut motion but one?

Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee: I am speaking on the financial policy of the railways. I am trying to show that railway finances ought to be so managed as to leave a certain amount of return to the taxpayer.

Shri Sri Prakasa: You are talking of the finances of the traveller!

Mr. President: Order, order

Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee: It is one and the same thing. My point is that since there is such heavy traffic and particularly in India where people will not just only travel for their health, for picnics or excursions but mainly for weddings, business or fares, there is room for some increase in rates and fares if we are prepared to give the passengers more amenities.

To wind up, I would plead for two things. Firstly there should be a levelling down the amenities, salaries and perquisites of officers on the railways. They are a class privileged beyond all other classes in this country. In fact, Sir, I think they are the most privileged in this country so far as Government officials are concerned because in addition to all this, not only do they travel themselves in great luxury but they are given endless passes for their families and when they do not get passes who can prevent them and their friends from travelling without tickets. Every one who travels knows very well that a railway official can turn a first class into a second or a second into a first or even let his friends go without payment. Then there must be a scaling up of the amenities and the payment of children's allowances or whatever else is necessary for the welfare of the lower and the subordinate staff so that the difference between the two classes should not be so marked. While railways ought not to make an abnormal profit on the running of our railways and on the capital that is sunk in our national railways, there ought to be a certain return possible at this time and when the

Mr. President: The Honourable Member's time limit is over.

Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee: I am also getting over.

Mr. President: He must get it over.

Lt.-Col. Dr. J. C. Chatterjee: There should be an equitable return of two, three or even four per cent from our national railways so that the finances of this country may not become hopeless.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa: Muhammadan): I find it difficult to discuss the entire financial position and policy of the railways in the short time that I have at my disposal and probably nobody could do justice to a subject so vast in fifteen minutes that is allotted to each member. I will only confine myself to such matters which are of vital interest to the Muslim nation whom I have the honour to represent in this House. A lot has been said of the nationalization of these railways. In practice all what nationalization means is that the Europeans in the higher superior posts are being replaced by Anglo-Indians and Hindus, and as such nationalization so far has been made to mean either Anglo-Indianization or Hindulization. I would refer you to the report of the Railway Board as published in 1944-45, Vol. I, which says that in 1934 the total number of the European officers was 1,074, which in 1945 has been shown as 586, an appreciable reduction. Again the number of the Anglo-Indians which in 1934 was only 114 has gone up to 191 and the number of the Hindus which in 1934 was only shown to be 415 has gone up to 692. The Muslims who in 1934 numbered 82 have gone up only to 178. You will notice, Sir, that in the same page showing the statement of percentages, the Muslim percentage which in 1934 was 4.67 and in 1944 it was 10.5 has gone down to 9.98 in 1945. Muslims have gained about 5 per cent between 1934 to 1944—an interval of ten years. This is a point which has to be very carefully considered. The Anglo-Indians whose population in this country would not be even one per cent have been able to hold in the railways a position which according to the report is nearly about ten per cent of the superior services. So what I want to impress is that this is the process of nationalization, which is revealed in their reports.

On the financial side the report does not show figures of wages payment community-wise and so I am not in a position to say what exact amount of money goes to the share of the Muslim employees, of the Hindu employees,

Anglo-Indian and other employees. Our own organisation, the All-India Muslim Employees League, Calcutta, have been able to give me some idea, though I must say I am unable to vouchsafe or guarantee its correctness. The Secretary of that organisation has shown that out of the total of 56 crores that is spent on the establishment, the Muslim share is not more than 5 crores. I am not going to discuss here the method which Railway Muslim Employees League has employed to arrive at this figure, which may be right or may not be correct because we have not been given any separate statistics to prepare same and I would ask the Honourable Member to look into this matter and see what amount of money is paid to the Muslim employees out of the total of 56 crores. This is a very pertinent issue. By nationalisation we mean equal partnership of all the nationals living in this land and unless this is done nationalisation is a misnomer.

I now come to the points raised by Mr. Ayyangar regarding interest charges, depreciation and other things. I do not suppose that it is very correct for me to find out whether 1/60 part of the depreciation as charged today is correct or not, because under the conditions in which the railway rolling stock has been for the last six years, probably depreciation should have been far more and probably the condition in which they have been left would deserve higher depreciation to be drawn than the scheduled depreciation of 1/60th which has been provided in the Railway Budget. That again is a question on which expert opinion would be necessary and I would ask the Honourable Member in charge to get expert opinion on the subject, whether the rate of depreciation allowed under present conditions is correct or not.

Dr. Chatterjee has raised a good many issues regarding the aristocratic ways in which the administration is carried on in the railways. One thing I must say that the menials, the labour and the subordinate staff, are certainly getting far lower pay than they should get according to the present conditions. There is no doubt that relief has been given to them in the form of grainshop arrangements and dearness allowance but I do not think that they compare very well with the conditions that prevail in the matter of prices of all commodities at present. I need not stress on the topheavy administration, a subject which my friends of the Congress Party have dealt with. I would only confine myself to the remark that labour, the menial and the subordinate staff do deserve a little more consideration than what has been shown to them so far. We are giving them relief to the extent of nearly 12 crores per year which is a loss to the railway exchequer by supply of cheaper grain and other commodities to their employees. This relief is in the form of cheap grain shops and other amenities. In this connection I would submit that the quality of the grain, which is supplied mostly and procured through contractors, is most unsatisfactory and is some times dangerous to human consumption. I referred the other day during question hour to the supply of mustard oil which was made in Dinapore Division and which resulted in the death, according to the Honourable Member of 11 employees and according to me of over 60 persons. What is necessary is this that this relief, although it may be a burden on the exchequer is not going to give the employees that kind of satisfaction and relief that it was aimed for. This is a serious matter which Government should take into consideration when they are framing their financial policy.

Then, again, I deplore the attitude of the railways of giving contracts so to say to the highest bidder, which is something rather mischievous. I do not think that contracts for vending or selling certain articles on the railway stations should be made a subject of gambling, that is that it should necessarily go to the highest bidder, because naturally the prices on sale of those commodities will reflect the charge that the contractors have paid. What I mean is that all facilities should be given to good class of professional men who have rendered good service and the object should be to see that they give better service in the supply of every class of commodity on the platforms and at railway stations. It should not matter to the railways whether the railways earn a few lakhs more

[Mr. Muhammad Nauman]

or not on such licensing. They should realise that although railways receive only a few lakhs more, they allow the contractors to squeeze the railway passengers by double or treble of that amount. It was in this connection that the Standing Finance Committee has suggested that we should try to see that every thing is done departmentally, particularly the catering side, which has been in the most deplorable condition for a long time. I would suggest to the Honourable Member to make a special enquiry on these lines and see what arrangements can be made to run these catering establishments on departmental lines. Another thing I would suggest for the convenience of the passengers is this. It may be rather difficult at the moment to start departmental arrangements at every division for catering. Therefore we should allow only such few contractors to exist who would guarantee good service and who should be prosecuted for bad supply. There was a lot said about certain contractors of aerated water on N. W. Ry. in this House and it was mentioned that the water used in aerated waters in many cases was found to contain cholera and other bacterial germs on N. W. Railway. If that is the position why cannot the railways terminate their arrangements and why cannot they have every thing done departmentally, so that the passengers may not have to complain every now and then in this House. This is a very important issue. A special enquiry committee should be set up consisting of experts with which three representatives of this House, I mean of the Standing Finance Committee might also be associated to look into the whole question. It will then be possible for Government to say that they have done every thing possible in the interest of the country and also for safeguarding their own financial interests as I believe their departmental arrangements will be paying concerns.

With these few words I resume my seat.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Sir, I am very glad indeed that my Honourable friend Prof. Ranga arrived in the nick of time to deal with his motion, because, if I may say so respectfully, he made a very thoughtful contribution to what is a difficult problem. But, Sir, as the debate went on, I seemed to notice a certain discrepancy of view between the Honourable the Mover and another member of his party and I am not quite clear what the view of the party is. But my honourable friend Mr. Nauman, I think, really hit the nail on the head when he said that it would not be possible to deal with these problems in so short a time, and that was really one of the points in my budget speech, that all these matters are linked—matters of the convention, of wages, of coal, the depreciation fund and all the rest of them—they are all matters which do need the most careful consideration, by committees of this House. My honourable friend in moving the motion made it very clear that he has full appreciation of the link between these various problems; he made it clear that he desired more amenities for the public and more amenities and pay for the staff; he made it clear that the amenities should not come out of capital but should be a charge on revenue; and my honourable friend behind him, Mr. Karmarkar, stressed the importance of service to the public in India, a point with which I entirely agree, and which was in fact the main theme of the first budget speech I made on this floor. I entirely agree with him also that the human element is a vital factor in any big undertaking and particularly so in the case of the vast undertaking of the railways. It is of importance not only in dealing with the staff, but in dealing with the public; and I can assure him that it gives me no pleasure whatsoever either to have to refuse to give the staff all the pay asked for or on the other hand to see the sort of traffic conditions which we have before us, thrust upon us by the circumstances of the war. One must have sympathy in dealing with these problems; but at the same time one is up against hard facts, hard financial facts, and, during war time, the difficulties of getting materials and labour and construction capacity for effecting the improvements that we would like to see. To refer to my honourable friend

the Mover, he said that in addition to amenities he would like to see also a contribution made by the railways to the general finances. In that he differed apparently in certain circumstances from my Honourable friend, Mr. Ayyangar

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: No, no. On a point of explanation Sir; there is no difference; only I have said after satisfying all these, pay to the general revenues.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That is just one of the questions which we have to consider on the convention committee, which I indicated at length should be set up. Under the old convention the railways were bound to make a contribution of 1 per cent to general revenues, whether they earned it or not; and it is because they did not earn it for a number of years and then earned a great deal more than in 1943 on the advice of the Convention Committee we upset that arrangement; and I suggest that for the future the contribution should be made, not as it were as a debenture charge, a prior charge before a surplus is earned, but that the 1 per cent should come out of the surplus when it is earned. These questions are matters of great importance, which as my friend Mr. Nauman said cannot be settled on the floor of the House: they must be the subjects for committees in the future.

Then my honourable friend the Mover stressed the desirability of increasing the wages of the staff and their amenities. In principle, in human sympathy, I entirely agree with him; but you cannot consider that question apart from all the other questions, including the contribution. Another point which my honourable friend Mr. Ayyangar made was that there should be in addition 5 crores set aside for amortisation of capital. I do not want to go into that in detail, because again that is a matter for further consideration. Amortisation has been recommended in the past, but on the other hand you must remember the fact that our capital assets have in fact very greatly appreciated with the general rise of prices. So that they probably represent more than they stand in the books at the present day

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: When they go down, what will happen?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: So you have got to find a time when you think the level of prices is fairly stable before you really consider whether amortisation is necessary or not. But that again is a matter for deep consideration and not for settlement here and now. But all my honourable friends were unanimous that in these circumstances, there must not be an increase of rates and fares: all these other things must be done and all this other expenditure must be incurred, but there must be no increase in rates and fares.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: That is the economy.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I expected therefore to hear them put forward suggestions as to how they should find this extra money without increased resources of revenue

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Greater economy, I have told you.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: My honourable friend the Mover referred to what Mr. Guruswami had said by way of answer. The answer was "Enter into a tripartite agreement between the management and the workers, the technical experts, and the community". That was his view, but I understood my honourable friend Mr. Ayyangar to dispute that

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: No, no; all of us are agreed.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That is correct? Well, then, my honourable friends will have an opportunity of bringing in this arrangement when they consider what form of management the railways should have as a result of the constituent assembly

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Why do you not begin to make the experiment now?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I suggest that that is not a solution for me to make in the short time left to me to speak; and in fact I do not believe it to be a solution at all. Mr. Guruswami would agree with me on that, because when I asked him how he was going to find the 78 crores which was asked for at the Moghal Serai Meeting, he said "I cannot find 78 crores in 15 minutes." Neither can I or anybody else. These problems do need time.

The second, and if I may say so, the better suggestion for improving the finances was the local manufacture of wagons and other railway requirements. This will result in economy, although in the initial stages when you are setting up the industries it is possible that some measure of protection and therefore some extra cost may be necessary; but in principle as a long term policy it is sound. Mr. Ayyangar went on to say that our road-rail policy was wrong and that what we must do is to compete with the roads, compete with the buses, and force down the rates and fares on the railways and therefore presumably on the road, in fact that we should go back to the old cut-throat days which we used to see before the war. Good for the public, except that from the point of view of moneys-worth they will not get the service. They will not get those cheap fares for very long, because the buses or the railways will be forced out of business or forced to reduce their standard of service; and further than that, if you force down fares you are going to make less money on the railways and therefore you will be forcing down wages, which is quite contrary to the rest of the argument put forward.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: It may force you to economise.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: All these things require, as I say, more consideration. My friend, Dr. Chatterjee, said that there was a surplus of officers, that they were paid too much and lived too luxuriously. As regards the first of those points I gave a considered opinion in a speech at the Railway Conference Association, this year it was, that in fact the railways were under-officered. That is my considered opinion after examining the position on the railways. We have only got one officer to 450 men. In the army you have got one to 50. Moreover officers on the Railways as elsewhere are paper logged, flooded with returns. That is particularly so under State management where the staff rules and so on are so complicated that a very great deal of their time which ought to be spent perhaps on seeing that the engines and the wagons move, is in fact spent in the office looking into staff cases. We are looking into the question of relieving them of that paper work but my considered opinion is that so far from being over-officered the railways are under-officered.

The question of whether they are overpaid or not is another matter and doubtless when the new regime comes in they will consider the whole question of railway rates of pay, but that of course would not apply to the officers who are under contract. I may say too that the revised rates of pay are not attractive to European officers and that is why even if we had wanted to recruit them, we should not have got any European officers. We have not of course recruited them during the war or for some years before. But the rates of pay are not attractive to the Indian staff either. Many of them on the revised rates of pay find it extremely difficult to live as an officer should live.

I will not deal here with Mr. Nauman's point about catering. He paid a high compliment to the Railways because he obviously was under the impression that if the catering was done by the Railways it will be done better than by expert caterers. I dare say that that is true. I hope so but it will very probably add to the cost. I do not wish to pursue this point now but I will only repeat what I have already said before that we will discuss these matters in the Central Advisory Council.

As regards the figures of the emoluments received by the Muslim element on the Railways I have not got the figures. We shall be having a debate on that subject tomorrow.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: Will the Honourable Member try to have that figure given then?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I do not think we have got it.

My friend the Mover made some extremely interesting remarks about the emoluments of the staff. He said, and I think rightly, that the workers should be properly paid but that they should not claim more than their share of what was going, that, in other words, they should not live above the general standard of the country. He said also that they should endeavour to be more efficient and get the results in that way. If they are more efficient, naturally one would expect that you would be able to do with less staff and that is quite properly one of the economic problems we are up against at this moment. We could probably do with considerably less staff but we are keeping on men in order not to create unemployment at the present time.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: We are getting railway expansion. Some staff can be kept on and you can get more work from them. That is what Mr. Gadgil suggested, also.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: What we are trying to do is to create more work for the railways and therefore to create the maximum employment but I think he is perfectly right about efficiency and as I said in my Budget speech, a great deal of the success of this policy of creating work depends on the willingness of the workers, not only the railway workers but all workers to work, but at the present time if there are strikes and disturbances there will be less money earned by the railways and therefore less for the railwaymen; and if the railwaymen themselves go on strike the same thing applies.

Now, Sir, my honourable friend said that on this matter of workers' wages, he and party would accept the finding of a tribunal but previous to that, we ought to set up a committee to go into the convention. I entirely agree. Mr. Ayyangar said that we should have a committee also to go into the depreciation fund and the basis of it. I entirely agree. It is in hand now. But obviously before going into those two questions—and they are linked with the question of wages, you cannot come to an immediate decision, because the whole of the things are linked together and you cannot come to a decision on one without coming to a decision on the other. What Government has done is to set up a commission to deal not only with railway wages but with the wages of all Government servants, because Government cannot deal with one section in isolation. They must deal with all their servants on a general level and simultaneously, and therefore it is the logic of this proposal that you cannot make any substantial immediate commitment. If you are to await the results of the Convention Committee, the Depreciation Fund Committee and the tribunal which I regard as being the equivalent of this commission which is being set up

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Suppose you don't open up those two questions. Will it be impossible to consider the wage problem on the basis of the demands of the Federation?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I consider that they have got to be thought of together and the sooner we get on to these problems the better.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Then you want to evade this issue?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No, Sir. I do not want to evade it but as I have said before I have some hesitation in committing the new Government one way or the other and that is really the position we are in today. It does require very careful thought and it shall have it and have it promptly.

In conclusion I should like to thank my Honourable friend, Mr. Karmarkar, for his kind remarks about my quitting India. I can assure him that I shall not be looking for a job but I can assure him also that my services will always be at the disposal of the new Government, if they want me, to serve India.

In view of what I have said, I hope my Honourable friend will withdraw his motion.

Mr. President: The question is—

“That the demand under the head ‘Railway Board’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

The motion was adopted.

Shri Satya Narayan Sinha (Darbhanga cum Saran: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, may I make one point? We have got still three cut motions left on behalf of our Party. May I suggest that in order that we may be able to reach all these three cut motions, the time-limit for speakers except the Movers should be restricted to 10 minutes?

Mr. President: If the House so desires, I have no objection. I had suggested the other day to fix a time-limit for each cut motion also, but the Honourable Members told me that they would arrange matters amongst themselves.

Shri Satya Narayan Sinha: We have hardly three hours at our disposal now and we have got three cut motions. The other way by which these three cut motions can be moved is that you restrict each cut motion to one hour or give 10 minutes to each speaker.

Mr. President: I think we shall try to do it both ways; but it will be difficult, if a real point is to be made, to finish the speech in 10 minutes.

Shri Satya Narayan Sinha: I have suggested, Sir, that the Mover should be given 15 minutes and the other speakers who will follow him should have 10 minutes each.

Mr. President: It is for the Members to decide. Personally, I should have preferred a smaller number of speakers with better speeches rather than a larger number of speakers who generally cannot make further points within the short time given. I think it would be better to fix up a time-limit for a particular motion.

Mr. Ahmed Ebrahim Haroon Jaffer: Why not restrict the number of speakers from each Party?

Mr. President: That is for the agreement of Honourable Members. If they agree amongst themselves, so much the better for me. That is why I said that instead of having a larger number of speakers with a smaller time at their disposal, it would be better to have a few speakers so that they may be able to thrash out all the points. But I am entirely in the hands of the Honourable Members.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: We can arrange that within our own Party: the Chair may not do it.

Mr. President: I am not going to do it. I have repeated thrice that it is entirely for the Honourable Members to adjust. The position stands like this: 15 minutes should be given to the Mover and ordinarily not more than 10 minutes to other speakers; and in the meanwhile we will restrict each cut motion to a time-limit of one hour.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: In the past there was a request that Government might put up two speakers—one at an early stage to place the facts before the House and another to wind up. Is that the wish of the House even now because it will take extra time?

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: We know what the Government is going to say. Therefore, two speakers from Government are not necessary.

Mr. President: I would prefer to keep that matter within my own hands. Government must place, to my mind, their position just in the beginning after the Mover has made his speech and another Government Member will have the right to reply.

Manufacture of Locomotives and Wagons

Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava (Ambala Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I move:

“That the demand under the head ‘Railway Board’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

Sir, by moving this cut motion I propose to censure the Government for its policy of non-manufacture of locomotives in the past as well as in the present. The present policy of the Government in regard to locomotives, on paper is that the Government is committed to manufacture locomotives but, in effect and

practice, the policy is that they are procrastinating and are not out to manufacture locomotives. So far as the public opinion in this country is concerned, there are no two opinions in the country that the manufacture of locomotives is very essential, nay it is absolutely indispensable in the public interest. Judging from the point of view of national security, I would make bold to say that no other proposal is more important than this one in regard to railways. We have just heard a quotation from the speech of Lord Dalhousie. Whatever may have been the opinion of Lord Dalhousie and other Lords in the past that the railways were necessary for quelling disturbances in the country, at the present moment it is absolutely clear that for purposes of national defence railways are absolutely essential. I have just to quote the words of the Honourable the Leader of the House to substantiate my allegation. In his budget speech of last year he said:

"There is no doubt that the timely arrival of metre gauge engines and wagons played a significant part in the victory of Imphal and the replacements and reinforcements which broad gauge railways have received, though relatively small hitherto, have just turned the scale in maintaining the civil life of the country."

I want to ask one question of the Honourable Member. What would have happened if these engines of the metre gauge had not arrived in the country? It follows that for security purposes and for national purposes it is absolutely essential that India should be self-sufficient in the matter of engines and other railway materials. This is a matter which the Government have admitted at times and have not admitted at other times just as it suited their convenience. In the years after the first Great War Government were anxious that locomotives be manufactured in this country. The reason was that on account of the political upheaval in the country and other causes, Government at that time realised that the absence of these locomotives would be detrimental to the best interests of the country. There is another reason also. At that time the manufacture of locomotives in England was not so beneficial as it became subsequently. This would appear from the speech of the late Pandit Motilal Nehru which he made in this House on 23rd February 1927. He quoted a communique of 1921 of the Government which ran thus:

"In pursuance of their expressed policy of making India as far as possible independent of outside sources in the supply of materials, the Government of India have had under consideration the question of the construction of Locomotive Engines in India, and they are now in a position to give a general undertaking that tenders will be invited annually in India for all the railway locomotives and locomotive boilers required by Government during the 12 years commencing with 1923."

He went further and said:

"Because in those days I referred by Honourable friend to the chapter on locomotives in the First Report of the Tariff Board. There they have shown that English manufacturers could not manufacture at a price at which they could be manufactured here and in fact they were driven to the expedient of selling below cost price."

To my mind, it is immaterial now, since it was admitted by the Honourable the Leader of the House two days back that India should be self-sufficient in the matter of railway materials, especially locomotives. Taking that to be the basis of my argument, I would ask what has been the policy of the Government in this matter during the last six years? I know that between the period of 1921 and 1930 the Government have been swinging to and fro on this policy. In 1921 the Government even went so far as to call for tenders from private manufacturers and a company under the name of Peninsular Locomotive Company Limited was started in India. About 30 lakhs of rupees were spent by that Company for this purpose, but nothing came out of it. Ultimately, this Company was wound up and the assets were purchased by the Government. All the shops and other things that were constructed by the Company were subsequently known as Tatanagar shops. I am just submitting to the House that previous to 1921 locomotives were manufactured in this country as would appear from a table given on page 1 of the report regarding the construction of locomotives in India in State Railway Workshops. It would appear that from the year 1885 up to 1926, 214 locomotives were prepared at Jamalpur, 108-

[Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava]

boilers and 99 tenders were also prepared and in Ajmer workshops they manufactured something like 435 metre gauge locomotives between 1896 and 1940. The report goes on to say:

"It may, therefore, be taken as established that there are no difficulties of a mechanical or other technical character standing in the way of Indian railways manufacturing their own locomotives in India".

I am submitting for the consideration of this House that so far as such aspects of the question are concerned as make for a successful venture of this kind, all things are present in the country. There is no difficulty of a mechanical or technical character standing in the way. Leaving this aside, we know that the manufacture of locomotives in this country is certainly cheaper and is bound to be cheaper than what it is in England and other manufacturing countries. I am not saying this on my own conviction. I am submitting this on the basis of the report by Mr. J. Humphries and Mr. K. C. Srinivasan. They say that in India even today the manufacture of locomotives would be at least 20 per cent. cheaper than what it is in other European countries. They gave many facts and figures in support of this conclusion and they are fully given in the report which will be found in the library of the House. Now, Sir, a perusal of this report would establish that as a matter of fact during the last twenty years, the Government by their policy of non-manufacture of locomotives in India have injured this country, if not more, at least to the tune of 20 crores of rupees. I make bold to say that a fair estimate on the basis which I have just submitted to the House would show to the satisfaction of the House that 20 crores have been wasted by this Government by not accepting and acting up to the proposal which they once themselves set up in this House. Sir, it has been found by this Committee that a locomotive of the weight of 145 tons could be manufactured at a cost of Rs. 98,000. Now Sir, this price of Rs. 98,000 is also exaggerated. As a matter of fact, a locomotive can be prepared at a much less cost, the price of materials which have been accounted for in this report has been taken on a maximum basis. The highest rates between 1928 and 1939 have been taken as the basis of this computation. It appears that as a matter of fact, it was not difficult for the Government, if they started works in 1921, (as they proposed to do) and completed them in 1924, to prepare locomotives at the factory, and if they had done so, it is quite certain that the Government would not have been put to the trouble of making abnormal payments to get them during the war. In fact, during the war period, this Government paid abnormal prices when they imported 985 locomotives, B.G. and 415 M.G. during the period of the war. I am not using my own words. These are the words of the Honourable the Leader of the House. He said in his speech that abnormal prices were paid, that engines were not up to the standard and he further stated that something like 94 crores were spent for wagons and locomotives. Ordinary accounting would show that as between 1924 and 1939, about 1,525 engines were imported into this country at a cost which would certainly have been less by about six crores if the locomotives were constructed in India. On page 46 of this Report by Mr. Humphries and Mr. Srinivasan, they say:

"The 'X E' type locomotive has a different wheel arrangement (2-8-2) and weighs about 145 tons. On the basis of the lowest price, per ton, paid for an imported locomotive, the cost of a 'X E' type locomotive would be Rs. 1,23,685. It will be noticed that 'X E' locomotives purchased in 1930-31 have actually cost Indian railways Rs. 1,34,110 each, i.e., about Rs. 10,000 more than the price of Rs. 1,23,685 as estimated above on a tonnage basis. The difference between the latter amount and the estimated cost of production of an 'X E' locomotive of Rs. 98,000 is about Rs. 25,000 equivalent to a saving of about 20 per cent. on the cost of the imported locomotive to Indian railways. During a period of increasing prices, the difference is more likely to be increased than lessened, and the conclusion can, we think, be fairly drawn that if broad gauge locomotives were manufactured in sufficient numbers in India, they would be generally available for the use of Indian railways at prices about 20 per cent. cheaper than the lowest prices at which imported locomotives can be placed on the line in India".

Sir, my submission is that even this Rs. 98,000 is a bloated price. According to their own findings, in some portions of this report it would appear that

the authors of this report indicated unequivocally, that engines could be manufactured at a lesser price. If you carefully go into the reasons why the Government did not manufacture locomotives between 1924 and 1939, you would find very interesting reasons put forward. Whereas in 1921, the Government had adopted the policy of manufacturing locomotives in this country, in later years, it gave up this policy. One of the reasons, very fantastic I should say, given by the Government was that they could not allocate the cost between manufacture and repair. That was one of the reasons given. The other reasons given were that the demand was not steady. May I humbly ask, is there any country in the world where the capital at charge on the railways is about 658 crores. mileage about 33,000 miles, track, 57,015, where 891 million passengers were carried in the year, goods to the tune of 132 million tons were carried, the gross traffic receipts were 225 crores, and the number of locomotives at present in use, 8,541, and the wagons 2,39,000? Is there any country in the world, where the Government of the country has got a huge undertaking like this and yet it has not got its own factory for manufacture of locomotives?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Sir, may I ask the Honourable Member if it would not be more interesting and profitable to the House that instead of going back into the history of the twenties, he would start to deal with the position today when Government, as he knows, have two factories in process of preparing to build locomotives.

Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava: I had gone into past history simply to point out how the Railway Board mismanaged the affairs of India and how it has injured India to the tune of several crores. I will now take up my subject from the place where the Honourable the Leader of the House asks me to take up. This report was published on 12th January 1940. I can quote apt passages from this report which would show the urgency of this matter. Para 92 of this report says:

"The demands of Indian railways for locomotives, during the first ten years of the locomotive life cycle between 1940 and 1980 are likely to be so large that railway transportation in India will be thrown out of gear if these requirements were not met promptly. There should be no greater difficulty in importing the machine tools that would be required for the new workshop than in obtaining the requisite number of locomotives themselves. As the actual demand for locomotives for the first five years of the next decade is likely to be much more than the maximum capacity of the new workshop, which, again, can only begin to function from 15 to 18 months after the work of building them has been commenced, a large number of locomotives will continue to have to be imported during these years. The countries from which the supplies have been available in the past are now more actively engaged in the production of armaments than in the manufacture of steam locomotives for export to India. In the circumstances, therefore, we feel that no efforts should be spared to ensure the manufacture of locomotives in India being started early."

Mr. President: The Honourable Member has a minute and a half more.

Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava: Six years have passed since this report was published. In para. 89, the authors of the report recommended early steps should be taken and it was expected that by the end of 1942, there would be complete equipment of these establishments. But what do we find? In 1943-44, the Honourable the Railway Member made a speech in regard to the railway budget in which he stated:

"The House will be interested to know that plans are already being actively prepared to set up a locomotive construction shop in India during the war if physically possible."

Now three years have lapsed and what do we find? In the speech of the Leader of the House he enigmatically said that work is in progress, from which one would be likely to gather that the work of manufacturing or of starting the shop or even the shop itself is in progress. On the other hand

1 P.M. we find from the speech of the Chief Commissioner of Railways that plans are going to be finalised. But in the report of the Standing Finance Committee we read that the finalising of the plans also cannot proceed any further. It now appears that in the year 1945-46 we are where we were. As a matter of fact this Railway Board which can be called the locomotive of the railway system of India is entirely European, and therefore they do not want where there is a conflict of interest between India and England to adopt a

[Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava]

policy which will be beneficial to India. As a matter of fact, the word 'locomotive' has the word 'motive' in it; and there is no 'motive' of the Railway Board to behave properly so far as India is concerned. As a matter of fact the entire policy of the Railway Board, if you kindly see it, will prove that the best interests of the country are not looked after; the Railway Board has been looking after the interests of Great Britain. Sir, the life of locomotives has been stated to be 35 years; the life of this white locomotive should also not have been more than 35 years. It is a worn-out body which cannot look after the interests of India and should be scrapped. I submit that this cut motion should be carried and Government should be censured. If they want to have this Railway Board it should undertake to have these locomotives manufactured as early as possible. The lapse of six years shows another loss of 10 crores, and more is likely to be lost if this policy is continued.

Sir, I move.

Mr. President: Cut motion moved:

"That the demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: Sir, I support the motion. For a long time we have stressed the need of manufacturing locomotives in this country. The history of this has been given and also the speeches made in the Legislative Assembly as early as 1927 were quoted by the Mover. It may be that the price-level during 1930 or even earlier was not favourable to the idea of manufacture of locomotives here because the cost of production might have been higher then compared to the cost of import from abroad. Now if you compare those prices with the prices we had to pay in 1940 onwards you will find that we paid four times the price that we would have paid in buying over our manufactured locomotives; and if that position was visualised I think Government would not have insisted on restricting the manufacturing capacity in this country. It is a well known fact that in order to develop an industry in any country a good deal of sacrifice has to be made in the early stages and without giving a fair trial for some time you cannot say whether it will be able to compete on the world parity prices or not. Whether you can be able to bring industry yield to the world parity prices is a question of time; and if we had started in 1927 or 1928 we would certainly have been in a much better position today. We need not have seen the difficulties in the matter of transport, as we did, only because sufficient locomotives were not at our disposal, and that is a position which has got very seriously to be considered for future as well. The Honourable Member has referred to the workshops at Ajmer, Jamalpur and Bombay and their capacity. I had an opportunity to visit Ajmer last year and I had a discussion with the Chief Engineer and the other authorities there, and I submitted a report of my visit to the Railway Board. What impressed me was that everything there was antediluvian. The whole workshop requires new implements for manufacture of what we require, in the matter of quantity and also of quality. Of course when I visited the workshop we were in the thick of the war and the possibility of any expansion could not be discussed then. Now that we can discuss this and draw up a programme, I say the need should be immediately met. Instead of importing locomotives we should import the machinery required for manufacturing these locomotives, otherwise this country cannot be made self-sufficient. In the meantime opportunity should be afforded to Members of this House to go and visit the workshops so that they may be in a position to make useful suggestions. The position is serious and, as we know, in the last five years in spite of orders having been placed in the U. K. and U. S. A. there was no possibility of getting priority transport in time; and the result was that we had to go without these locomotives for months and years. Many of them were received late but there are many for which our orders still remain unfulfilled. Therefore it is clear that we need well-equipped workshops in this country to manufacture locomotives for our own use. I do not pretend to give expert advice; it is for the Honourable Member and the Railway Board to secure that expert advice, as to what kind

of workshop would be suited to the needs of a country like ours, and I only want to stress that this should be taken up as soon as possible and as soon as practicable. Sir, I support the motion.

Mr. P. K. Salve (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, it is my misfortune to speak to empty benches of the Treasury.

Shri Sri Prakasa: The Treasury itself is empty!

Mr. P. K. Salve: The Honourable the Transport Member is big enough to fill up the benches. He appears to me by his size and volume that all the sections of the Penal Code are rolled into one! But, Sir, on an important matter like this, it would have been better if I was able to give a piece of my mind—and not a very pleasant piece of it, either—to the Members of the Treasury Benches. This is a very important subject and of vital interest to our country, but they have no interest in this country, and that is why they are absent.

Sir, I have the speech of the Honourable the Transport Member before me, and I shall restrict myself to the figures given in his speech. It is stated in his speech:

“934 broad gauge engines were ordered last year. 172 remain to come. 29 per cent. of 7,279 engines have passed the normal age and it may be necessary to order them from overseas. Those will be 2,110 engines.”

I do not know why the word ‘may’ has been put in. You know, Sir, that the word ‘may’ is very often interpreted as ‘shall’ in law and it is not ‘may be purchased’ but ‘shall be purchased’. I shall not be surprised if there is an Ordinance to that effect that the War Transport Member shall purchase 2,110 engines from overseas. About the wagons, the figures are:

“8,000 Canadian wagons ordered, of which 6,000 have been received; 2,000 are to come, 10,000 wagons ordered from the United Kingdom, 3,800 received, 6,200 still remain to come.”

That is the picture; the picture is that they have been ordered from abroad and they are coming. We have been looted and plundered already; further loot and plunder is in store for us. The old method of this Imperialist exploitation has not been discarded; it is still there; it is there with a vengeance. The people of India, through their representatives, have time and again asked that locomotives and wagons be constructed in India. There is sufficient material for it. The Honourable the Transport Member has told us that the locomotive works are now in the course of inauguration. These works are in the course of inauguration. It is a long, long course, Sir, and there is no plan, nor is there any estimate. The Honourable the Transport Member cannot and will not tell us when he will produce the first engine in this blessed Kanchrapara workshop.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I told the House that the other day.

Mr. P. K. Salve: He said they are in the course of inauguration. That may mean anything. It is like this Sir: at the back of his cranium the Honourable the War Transport Member has a picture of the workshop and the engine. He may or may not have even transplanted that picture and those designs on a blueprint. The workshop is in the air, and so are the engines of this precious Kanchrapara. He says, ‘possess your souls in patience, and I shall deliver the engines’

Mr. President: Order, order. How long is the Honourable Member like to take?

Mr. P. K. Salve: Ten minutes more.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Half Past Two of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Half Past two of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Mr. G. V. Mavalankar) in the Chair.

Mr. President: There is just one Honourable Member who has to take the oath. Then I will call upon the Honourable Member to continue his speech.

MEMBER SWORN:

Rao Bahadur N. Siva Raj (Nominated Non-Official).

Mr. P. K. Salve: Sir, I was dealing with this workshop of Kanchrapara and I said that the workshop is in the air and so are the engines of this Kanchrapara. The Honourable the Transport Member says "Possess your souls in patience and I shall deliver the engines". We are constrained to cry with the Psalmist and ask, "How long, oh Lord, how long?" And the answer is "Not till kingdom come".

Sir, belonging to an imperialist frame of structure, as he does, it is not in the grain of the Honourable the Transport Member to develop and construct the Indian locomotive. We are asking him to do the unnatural thing and he and those of his ilk will put it off and put it off and put it off. Sir, they will put it off *ad infinitum* and *ad nauseam*. Why should they cause loss to England and Canada. Why should they not send the wealth of India to their relations in their homeland? They are the guardians and the watch-dogs of the wealth, past, present and future of their masters of the United Kingdom. That is why, Sir, in order to guard that wealth they will shoot down the patriotic men of the I. N. A., and the heroes of the Royal Indian Navy and the citizens of Bombay and Calcutta and Madras and all over India. Sir, it is futile to hope that the Honourable the War Transport Member is serious about the Kanchrapara locomotive workshops. Last year he told us that the works are finalized or have been finalized. This year, in the budget speech, he says they are in the course of inauguration. In the proceedings of the Railway Finance Committee in the memorandum presented to us it is said—I shall read from the book itself on page 65:

"The ultimate repair capacity required by Kanchrapara in addition to the manufacturing capacity is a question of extreme complexity at the present time, and it is clear that until some estimate of the capacity has been obtained finalising of plans cannot proceed."

"Finalizing of plans cannot proceed": There is the end of the matter; that stops everything. Now what is this complexity? He has not told us that. Is it the imperialistic methods of exploitation that causes the complexity? These are the inconsistencies which have been placed before us. There is an attempt to throw dust in the eyes of the Honourable Members. It would have been better for the Honourable Member to have said, 'I am ashamed of it. I am unable to do it. It is not in the interests of my distant homeland overseas to build any Indian engines. My homeland stands to lose heavily.' Sir, these Britishers have swung back from the mood of chivalrous adventure to a mood of self-interest. These Britishers have swung back from the role of world deliverers to the role of England first, England last and England always. What has he in store for us? Two babes: one, the small babe of a workshop in Ajmer, still in its cradle, and the second the unborn babe at Kanchrapara, still in embryo. This is all he has produced in the last almost one century of the history of the Indian railways. Shall we sing him "halleluyahs" for these babes—one in the cradle and the other still unborn? I say it was unnatural for the Transport Member to deliver us any locomotive from Kanchrapara.

The House will bear with me if I tell them a story. It is a Puranic story. There was a King, and the Queen would not deliver a son. The King went to the hermitage of Rishis and by devotion and prayer pleased them. They were pleased with his devotion. They told him to ask for a favour and he said, 'let my Queen deliver a son'. They agreed and they got some holy water and sanctified that in a vessel and kept it in the hermitage. It was kept for some-

days and mantras were read over it to sanctify it further to give it the necessary efficacy to make the Queen pregnant with a son.

One day the King went out for shikar and on his return he felt verily thirsty. It was night time. Not finding any water anywhere else he took this vessel and under compulsion of thirst drank up the water. To the horror of the Rishis the water had disappeared. Next morning there was an enquiry. They wanted to know what had happened to the holy water. They found that the Raja had drunk it. They said the Raja must get pregnant with a son and the Raja got pregnant with a son. They told him that he had to deliver the son but he said it was not natural for him to do so. They said, natural or unnatural, you shall deliver the son. Sir, the foetus developed inside and for years to come it would not come out. It was difficult. It was unnatural. After years, Sir, when the foetus grew, it refused to remain inside and it burst through the ribs and the child came out.

Now, Sir, the Raja delivered, therefore, a son much against his will. I say that if the Honourable Member does not produce a locomotive in its natural course, at Kancharapara, it will burst out at some other place. It may be in the Government House at Delhi or Simla. These Houses are now well known to be producers of engines of repression and oppression. In course of time we expect that these Houses will produce real engines for the good of the people.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member's time is up.

Mr. P. K. Salve: As a matter of fact I would have dealt with the matter more thoroughly if I had time. These people are now telling us "We are going and power is going to be transferred to you. Treat us as if the imperialist Britisher was dead and gone". Sir, they have been dinning into our ears since the days of Mr. Edwin Samuel Montagu, the Jew Secretary of State for India, that the Britisher is dead. We have joined in their funeral procession. We have read their obsequial ceremonies and we have chanted the last verses of the funeral. But when we went near the grave we found it empty. Further assurances have now been given that the grave will not be found empty. Sir, I have my fears and apprehensions. It is possible that when we get near the grave we might find this time the coffin box and the crosses and the flowers but not the body nor the dead soul of the Imperialist Britisher.

Sir, I support the motion

Mr. A. O. Turner: Sir, after the interesting speech we have just heard I am afraid my remarks will appear very prosaic. We on the Government benches have been rather surprised to find that the Honourable Mover and the subsequent speakers have displayed an extraordinary out-of-dateness in dealing with the subject. The Honourable Members opposite still seem to be thinking of conditions in the year 1920 which are no longer of much interest to this House in 1946. They seem to have failed to realise that the failure to act in the past has now been superseded by the determination of the Government to get locomotives out of the two works which are being utilised by any means and as soon as possible.

First as regards Singbhum, we have already heard that boilers will soon be coming from Singbhum. It may interest the House to hear briefly the terms of the agreement with the Tatas for the manufacture of boilers and Locos at Singbhum.

The agreement is for 16 years from the 1st of June 1945 when Tatas took over the shop. The plan of production is that in the first year 50 boilers will be produced. In the second year the capacity will be stepped up and will reach the rate of 100 boilers. In subsequent years, the outturn will be 100 units, each boiler or locomotive complete with boiler, being taken as one unit. Within 18 months Tatas must submit a scheme for the manufacture of 50 locos per year.

The production of locomotives is to be planned on the following lines. During the first two years after the date of the receipt of the plant and

[Mr. A. C. Turner.]
 machinery the number will be agreed mutually. In the period thereafter 50 locos per year. Government have reserved to themselves certain controls over capital expenditure. Government have given a guarantee of purchase for the first two years of the entire production of boilers and thereafter of 100 units per year. If the company should at any time prove to be in a position to manufacture boilers or locos in excess of the guaranteed number, Government would purchase those in preference to imports. Government have further agreed not to enter into agreement with any other firm on terms more liberal than these.

As regards prices to be paid for the boilers and locomotives for these which are produced in the first two years of the production of boilers and locos the price paid will be the actual cost with a maximum of the price paid for similar boilers or locos which are imported from the United Kingdom. During the rest of the period prices will be negotiated in advance on the basis of production cost plus 7 per cent. return on capital. The prices to be paid by Tatas for the different components and materials which they get from other Tata concerns will be regulated on a favoured basis. Penalties are provided for short delivery. They are Rs. 3,000 per boiler and 7,500 per loco.

Another condition is that the company will train apprentices nominated by the Government. Finally, Government will have a Director on the Board.

Diwan Chaman Lall: May I interrupt the Honourable Member to ask him if he can tell the House the number of locomotives that have already been ordered by the Government during recent months?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I can answer that. The answer is none.

Diwan Chaman Lall: Do I take it that no locomotives have at all been ordered to replace the

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No further orders have been placed for delivery from abroad. There are, however, certain numbers still to come from abroad.

Diwan Chaman Lall: I hope my Honourable friend would realise that what I am asking for is information regarding the orders placed by the Government of India for locomotives abroad. Before this scheme comes into operation what is the total number of locomotives that have so far been ordered, so far delivered and so far not delivered?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I gave the figures in my budget speech. There are 934 broad gauge engines on order, of which 735 have been put into service, 29 had been shipped and have been already received in India and 172, at the time I made up the speech, was still to come from abroad. No further orders have been placed. It is possible that we may have to place some orders for passenger engines before these works come into operation. We shall defer that as far as possible. I may add that orders for boilers have been placed with Tatas as a preliminary to the orders for locomotives.

Mr. P. K. Salve: What happens to these superannuated engines?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Let my friend finish his speech and I shall explain.

Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): Another point which the Honourable Member should make clear is as to why these orders have been placed with Tatas and why not Government manufacture themselves.

Mr. A. C. Turner: Sir, I continue. I have dealt so far with Tatas. The other shop is Kanchrapara; and as has already been explained to the members of the Standing Finance Committee, Government have already ordered certain machinery costing 16 lakhs, and another 18 lakhs have been approved by the Standing Finance Committee for Railways for other expenditure, mainly on steel work and new drawing office accommodation. Further a provision of 82 lakhs has been made in the budget for the coming year, which will be spent

mostly on plant and machinery and such structural alterations as may be undertaken without impairing the general working of the shops.

In regard to progress at Kanchrapara we are experiencing certain difficulties in that owing to heavy arrears of maintenance of locomotives on the E.I.R. it is found necessary not to reduce the repairs which are being undertaken at Kanchrapara more than can possibly be avoided. This is delaying matters to a certain extent but that is a position which we hope will improve with time.

These then are the steps which Government have taken and are taking to implement their policy.

The last speaker quoted figures from the speeches of the Honourable the Leader of the House and made a calculation of the number of locomotives and wagons due for renewal. It may interest the House to know that 1,893 broad gauge and 780 metre gauge locomotives have passed the 35 year life basis, and that by 1960 as many as 4,812 broad gauge and 1,444 metre locos will have similarly passed the 35 year life. But what is important to note is that the fact that they have passed the 35 years life does not necessarily mean that they will be scrapped as soon as they have reached that age. Many of them will be continued in service even though it may be to some extent uneconomic, so long as they are required to move the traffic.

Turning to wagons, there are 3,834 broad gauge four-wheelers and 9,741 metre gauge four-wheelers, which have reached the forty years life limit; and by 1960 no less than 68,263 broad gauge and 19,626 metre gauge four-wheelers—as apart from bogies—will have similarly reached that limit. The House will therefore see that there is ample scope for activity in both the locomotive and the wagon shops for many years to come.

Turning now to the question of manufacturing capacity: as the Honourable Member for War Transport has said on more than one occasion, the wagon capacity of the country should be ample to take care of all the country's requirements. During the war, the industry worked its capacity up to a peak of nearly 800 wagons per month, and last year it manufactured 7,636 wagons. In addition to carrying over all the balance of the current year of 10,000 wagons of the 1945-46 order, a further order has since been placed for 4,100 G.S. wagons to follow the present order. The House therefore cannot have any possible complaint that the wagon industry in India has not been developed to meet the requirements of the country.

Some members of this House seem to be unaware of the fact that railway wagons are made in India. From 1942 to 1944, 4,776 wagons were turned out by firms in India; and as I have just said in 1945, 7,636 wagons were so produced.

Finally, as regards locomotives I think these figures have already been mentioned in this House, but I will repeat them. The estimated annual requirements in replacements are 200 locomotives, of which 157 are broad gauge and 43 metre gauge. The annual outturn expected from the two works to which I have already referred are as follows: Kanchrapara 80: Singhbhum 50: Total 130. As the Leader of the House has already said, the question of a third works depends upon the ability of Singhbhum to work up to 80 locomotives, that is an extra 80 locomotives, and upon the number of Diesel and electric locomotives which may be ordered in the future.

Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan: Sir, I want to take up only two minutes of the time of the House, and only on this point. I asked my honourable friend, who has just spoken, one question and he has not explained—why these orders have been placed with Tatas and why Tatas are being encouraged to put up a plant in order to build these things, while this House has been demanding that the Government itself should build locomotives and not give this work to any firm. If this policy is pursued, and if the Tatas are encouraged to put up a plant for building locomotives, then it will be very difficult in future to retrace our steps and for the Government itself to compete with Tatas later on. I think in the interests of the country it is advisable that Tatas should not be

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encouraged to put up the new plant for building these locomotives, but that all the money should be invested by the State. That is the only point which I wanted to say and I may add that the House has expressed this view very strongly in the past, and I hope it will again urge this point by supporting this Cut Motion and express their opinion once again that they are in favour of the Government itself putting up the plant and not giving it to any private firm. Sir, I support the cut motion.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Sir, as my honourable friend the Financial Commissioner has said, quite a number of members have apparently been dealing with the position as if it were the 1920's or at least a somewhat earlier date than the present and have suggested that this Government is not serious in its determination to go ahead with locomotive manufacture. I feel very strongly about it, as it was I who urged on the Government the desirability of making a final decision to go ahead during my tenure of office. I think it is rather unfair of members opposite to suggest that we are not in earnest over this. My friend Mr. Salve came out with very good advice concerning how to get on with the matter! I do not really, think that I need that advice, because I can really claim that I am the father of twins already, if not of triplets. But I hesitate a little to claim the latter, because the Ajmer works is already in operation. What he complains of really, I think, is the delay in delivering the goods and for that purpose he has given some good advice as to what the Rishis would do in the circumstances. The normal answer for Government would be 'I will look into it' but Sir, I claim that that is not necessary. I have no need of Rishi water because I am already a proud father and he might well send a telegram to his friends to say "Both father and children are doing well".

There are one or two Honourable Members who talked about the cheapness of manufacture in this country. I am not at all sure about this. That remains to be seen. We made a number of engines in the past. Some were manufactured at Jamalpur and we have been making them at Ajmer for some years. We hope to make 15 by the end of the next financial year there but when I was down in Ajmer last I went into the cost and I am by no means certain that it is economic. As my Honourable friend Mr. Nauman said, the works there are somewhat antiquated and they are not really fitted for modern locomotive manufacture. Perhaps that is one of the reasons why cost is not as satisfactory as it should be when you take into account full overheads which ought to be debited to each individual locomotive.

Then again some early speaker said that the Humphreys—Srinivasan committee suggested that the cost of an engine would be Rs. 98,000 but that, Sir, was a pre-war figure. My Honourable friend who quoted it was inclined to compare it with the war time cost of modern locomotives. Obviously with a different level of costs in operation, that is not a fair comparison. I cannot tell you what the locomotives are likely to cost. That depends on certain things but the capital cost which I think the Srinivasan report estimated at about 60 or 70 lakhs is now likely to be in the neighbourhood of 2½ to 3 crores at Kanchrapara. Then of course we are bound to have teething troubles in setting up any new industry in the country and you cannot expect to get very economic costs in the initial stages in setting up a big works. That has been our experience recently in the Tata works for building wheels and axles. We did not get anything like full production at the works in the early stages. Presumably that put up the cost, although I have no knowledge of it, but certainly the delivery was delayed. That is one of the reasons why we ordered a considerable number of wagons from abroad and also wheels and axles, because we could not get the outturn from these works which we expected because of the teething troubles. But, Sir, I understand that it is very definitely the policy of the country to go ahead with locomotive manufacture even if it is a bit costly at the start in order that the country may have its economic independence and be strategically self-reliant, and going ahead we are.

Now, Sir, one or two members criticised the imports during the war, forgetting, I think, that a good number of those engines were on lease-lend. It is said, quite correctly, that in accounting to the railways they were charged at abnormal prices. That is true to the extent that they were considerably more expensive to the railway budget than if they had been ordered before the war but I would remind the House that we now own these engines, they are pretty good engines and as a result of the financial policy we have followed they are written down to a pre-war value. It is also very doubtful if you could buy them cheaper today or if you will be able to buy them cheaper for some years to come. Meantime we have those engines at a written down value and earning good money for the country and I suggest that Government should rather be congratulated on a good stroke of business by the Railways than be condemned for getting these engines.

I do not think I need dwell on wagons. My Honourable friend the Financial Commissioner has pointed out that we are self-supporting in the matter of wagons. During the war, owing to the rapid increase of traffic, we required more wagons than the wagon works could put out and hence the reason for having to get them from abroad. The 1942-48 order was only delivered at the end of last year, that is to say, the orders which we should have got in 1943 were not delivered till 1945. It was not the fault of the wagon works. They had their difficulties in getting steel, wheels and axles and they were overcrowded with other operational work. But the fact remains that we could not get the production up at that stage of the war, so that we placed all the orders with them which they could take. Today we have over 6,000 still due on the old 10,000 order and we have placed another 4,100 with them for next year, so that they will be very fully occupied for a considerable time to come and from the figures which the Financial Commissioner has quoted it is clear that they will have work for a long time ahead.

Turning to the reasons why Tatanagar was chosen, I find that my Honourable friend is not here. I will refer to that again in a minute. First I will deal with Kanchrapara. It is said that there has been delay in getting ahead with the works there. Well, Sir, Kanchrapara is not a free works like the Peninsular Works at Singbhum. There it was possible to erect plant and turn it over solely to the manufacture of boilers straightaway but at Kanchrapara we have had to carry on the permanent overhauls of locomotives at the same time. My friend Mr. Neogy in a previous debate and Mr. Salve this morning thought that they caught us out about the "finalising" of plans. I looked up the word 'finalise' in a dictionary to see what it means and strange to say I could not find the word at all. I think it must be a modern word which was not found in a 1901 dictionary, like 'maximise', 'hospitalise' and so on. But I take it to mean—"to bring to finality". When you are dealing with industrial works, I think any industrialist would say that in fact you never bring a modern works to finality. I have been connected with a paper mill in the past which was erected in 1881. I have been connected for 25 years with it and it certainly is not finalised yet and so far as I can see never will be. But the Kanchrapara works have gone ahead

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: May we take it from the Honourable Member that these works will also take 25 years?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The Honourable Member has not understood the position. In modern works you are always adding and improving and you never finalise and that is what is happening in Kanchrapara. The works have gone on far enough ahead to enable us to get busy. But, Sir, as I was explaining, at Kanchrapara you are not dealing with new works; you are remodelling old works and you have got to provide for permanent overhauls of locomotives there. Your problem at Kanchrapara is to re-organise the old works and provide for adequate and increased quantity of permanent overhauls at works. The burden which is going to be put on the works is, therefore, bigger than we anticipated some time ago when we thought we should be able to do without the overhauls. Therefore, we have got to make the works larger than we expected. There is nothing new in that. Both at

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Swindon and Crewe in the United Kingdom construction and overhauls take place in the same shops and the only difficulty at Kanchrapara is that we have got to do rather more overhauls than we had expected and therefore we had to modify the plans to a large capacity.

An Honourable Member: When will you produce the first engine in these Kanchrapara works?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I will tell you in a moment. At Tatanagar, as my friend the Financial Commissioner said, the arrangement with Tatas is that they will produce blue prints by October 1946 and engines two years after. Therefore, they are due to produce engines about October 1948. The programme in the Kanchrapara works, where we are rather slower in going ahead, is to produce 30 complete engines in 1949, 50 the next year and then to work up to 80 in the next year or two. That is what we hope to achieve in addition to a heavy programme of permanent overhauls.

I would just like to make one point about engine construction. You might say that this is not an entirely new industry to this country. We have made them at Jamalpur and also at Ajmer. Our workmen are used to boiler repairs and, practically speaking, to making almost every part of an engine. What is new is to set up an entirely new works devoted primarily to engine construction. In the past as in the case of Ajmer and Jamalpur, the works were primarily devoted to overhauls and only incidentally to construction and very often to construction largely from parts imported from abroad. We hope in these new works to manufacture almost every part in this country instead of, as in the past, importing large portions from abroad and merely assembling them in this country.

I think I have answered all the points except the point of my Honourable friend Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan, who could not wait for the answer. He asked why did the Government go ahead with engine works at Tatanagar when the country wished the works to be Government owned? That was all gone into at the time and I think it was discussed on the floor of the House—certainly it was mentioned in my budget speech either of last year or the year before, last year I think—and no serious exception was taken to the policy then. The reason why we went ahead with Tatanagar was that we wanted to avoid delay. At Tatanagar we had these Peninsular shops which had been working for the manufacture of armoured vehicles. We found they could be released for boiler manufacture and we had on the spot the Tata firm with all their supervising experience. We had there steel and we could, therefore, go ahead at once so we entered into this arrangement with them in order to get boiler and engine manufacture going quickly. It is the quickest way we could do it and we did it. One of the governing factors was that we very badly needed the boilers as a war measure and, as I mentioned the other day, we hope to get these boilers in the very near future. They should be coming out of the shops almost immediately.

I think I have covered all the points and I hope I have satisfied the House that we are really going ahead in earnest and that these engines will come out of the shops and that everything that is possible is being done both by the Government and by the firm of Tatas to get the results as quickly as possible.

On the subject of wagons, as the industry is already adequate for the country's need and is fully kept with work, I do not think there is really any further to be said. I trust the House is satisfied that everything possible is being done to meet the situation.

Mr. President: The question is:

“That the demand under the head ‘Railway Board’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”
The motion was adopted.

Inconvenience to Passengers

Fandit Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava (Ajmer-Merwara: General): Sir, I move:

"That the demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."

I move this out motion with the dual object, firstly, with a view to concentrate the attention of the House upon a question of great importance, namely, the suffering of third class passengers, and, secondly, because the attitude of the railway administration has been utterly callous and indifferent to the suffering of the lower class passengers. It is, indeed, regrettable that in these civilised times we have still to hear from the Honourable the Leader of the House that he is not armed with a magic wand by which he can change overnight the miserable state of affairs that prevails throughout the country in respect of the sufferings, miseries and tortures to which the lower class passengers are subject throughout the length and breadth of India. It is all the more regrettable because it is the third class passenger who is the best patron, benefactor and pay-master of the railway administration. It is a proposition which, I respectfully submit, cannot seriously be disputed by the railway administration.

The figures, as has been revealed by the latest official report of the Railway Board, clearly prove that out of the 76 crores and 64 lakhs that come into the coffers of the railway administration from passenger traffic, the contribution of the third class passengers has been no less than 58 crores and 88 lakhs. That is even during these abnormal times when according to the speech of the Honourable the Railway Member, the contribution from the superior class passengers has risen by 35 per cent. even then it is the lower class passengers who are contributing no less than 80 per cent. of the total revenue from the passenger traffic of railways. If we look to the number of passengers that travel year after year, we find that in the last year, 1944-45, no less than 91 crores travelled by third class as compared to 5 crores 88 lakhs of all the three superior classes, including Inter class. Notwithstanding this fact, we find the Honourable the Railway Member admits the deplorable state of affairs. He also admits the difficulties, the tortures and miseries to which the lower class passengers are subject, but he says, 'I am helpless, I cannot help because the conditions cannot be changed overnight, I am not a magician, I have no magic wand.' I ask Sir, whether after a century of continual exploitation to which the travelling public has been subject, this deplorable state of affairs should be continued any longer. We must admit this is due to hopeless mishandling of railway finances.

You will observe that as early as 1937, a committee enquired into this and its definite finding is that as the lower class passengers pay 92 per cent. of the total passenger traffic revenue, it should be the definite policy of railway administration to increase their comforts and conveniences in future. Let us see what has been done by the railway administration from 1937 to 1946. I submit with all the emphasis at my command that there can be only one answer, namely, that the conditions have steadily deteriorated. The lot of third class passengers has become much worse, in fact this is even admitted in the Budget speech by the Honourable Railway Member. I cannot admit the argument that conditions cannot be improved. According to the closing remarks of Honourable the Railway Member it will take at least 15 years to improve the conditions, if I have followed him correctly.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No, Sir.

Pandit Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava: The last war has proved, if proof was necessary what human ingenuity could do to overcome difficulties and to improve conditions. If you are really sincere, if you are earnest, and if you are really enthusiastic to solve the problem, you can tackle it. These third class passengers have been subject all along to systematic exploitation by the railway administration. While they are the real pay-masters out of their income, they are exploited by the superior class passengers as well as by the

[Pandit Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava]

top heavy railway administration. It is a wonder to me why the Railway administration should say they cannot change the conditions overnight. The question is have you ever tried seriously to solve this problem with a sympathetic and with a real desire to change the conditions? I respectfully submit, it has never been done and it will never be done until and unless all the third class travelling public join together into a Union and give notice of a strike and bring about the same state of affairs as has been brought about in other concerns. The entire railway machinery will then be paralysed, if tomorrow the third class passengers decide not to travel in railways for some time, because, it is they who feed the administration. The grievances of third class passengers are as old as the existence of railways themselves. They have been ventilating their grievances in the press and on the platform and they have also urged for their redress on the floor of this House year after year. Notwithstanding that, nothing has been done beyond making hollow promises, couched in sugar coated language, and nothing has been achieved.

Let us now examine if their conditions are sought to be improved in any way during the Budget year 1946-47. I am surprised that even in this Budget nothing tangible has been mentioned on which the people can rely. I assume, it will be answered that a sum of no less than 76 lakhs, 64 thousand have been provided in this Budget for public amenities. But is there any guarantee that this sum which has been provided in the name of public amenities will be utilised for lower class passengers whose claims and whose needs are definitely greater than that of the upper class passengers. It is just possible that the entire sum will be spent by the railway administration towards improving the amenities of superior class passengers, towards making the first and second class carriages comparatively more comfortable or even converting all of them into air-conditioned coaches as has been suggested in the Railway Budget. So far as third class carriages are concerned, it has been said that improved types of carriages are being made. We do not know when these carriages are likely to be run. In the Explanatory Memorandum attached to the Budget, it is said that about 290 carriages most of them broad gauge carriages will be constructed. We do not know whether all of them will be of improved design. Then again it is not said whether these carriages will be run on lines before the expiry of this year. Perhaps they may not come into existence at all. Then what will these 290 carriages do when we find that more than thirty thousand carriages are already in existence and are needed for use daily on the railways? If the process goes on at this rate it means that third class passengers must wait for another sixty years before their lot can be improved. I submit that this is nothing but bungling the entire business. His needs are so great and his troubles are so acute that immediate relief is necessary and it cannot be deferred for any number of years,—whether it is 15 years or fifty years.

The misery and trouble of the third class passengers begins from the time he comes to the booking window for buying a ticket and lasts until he reaches his destination. At the booking window he has to go hours before the train is due to leave because he is not sure if he will be able to buy a ticket; and if he is of a frail constitution he will either have to go without a ticket or take the help of a police constable or a bully who can alone help him. And what about the waiting shed? It is extremely dirty, there is no latrine or washing-place or bath-room; and if a passenger has to put up there at night while breaking a journey, he runs the risk of being robbed by pickpockets or thieves. And these sheds are so dirty because they are easily accessible to dogs and all kinds of cattle. Then when he goes to the platform he has to make a big struggle to get into the compartment, and he has to get in somehow or other. He very often has not got the space to sit down or even to stand, and we know that sometimes he performs a long journey by standing on the footboard, so much so that a law was made making it punishable. But he has to travel on the footboard even at the risk his life because he has to perform the journey somehow. Then in the compartment itself you find overcrowding

to the point of suffocation. Cases of heatstroke are fairly frequent in many trains in summer. If a passenger has to go to the latrine at night in a compartment which has no light or very little light, you can imagine the state of things he is confronted with. The latrine itself is very small, only 2½ ft. by 2½ ft., and it is with great difficulty that one can get into it, and for a fat man the trouble is all the greater.

Then the third class passenger, according to the railway administration, has perhaps no claim to travel by fast trains. In my own province of Ajmer we find that even on trains running on metre-gauge the third-class passenger in order to secure a seat in a mail train must pay extra fare.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member has just one minute more.

Pandit Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava: While the First and Second class passengers can travel in fast mail trains without paying anything extra, there is no reason why the third class passenger should be asked to pay extra. What is the reason for this differential treatment to the third class passenger? There are trains like the B. B. & C. I. Mail and the Frontier Mail which have no third class carriages. I submit that this distinction is unjust.

Then, Sir, several trains which used to be run formerly have now been stopped and I want an assurance from the Transport Member that of these 76 lakhs of rupees provided in the Budget at least 90 per cent. should go to the third class passengers and to the amelioration of his condition. Then there is awful paucity of water at the stations as also of good food. I submit these are ordinary amenities in modern times, and these should be provided. And if they do not undertake to provide these things they will be made to undertake them. Sir, I move.

Mr. President: Cut motion moved:

“That the demand under the head ‘Railway Board’ be reduced by Rs. 100.”

Khan Bahadur Zafar Hossain Khan (Government of India: Nominated Official): Sir, the major inconvenience that my Honourable friend has referred to results from overcrowding. Almost every railway administration in the world in the belligerent countries as well as in the neutral countries has had to face this overcrowding and has seen a continuous and unprecedented increase in their passenger traffic during the war. In all countries directly affected by the war this vast increase in traffic has had to be worked with considerably curtailed train services. India has been no exception to it and it is possible that conditions of travel in certain parts of this country have been as bad as elsewhere in the world. During the war quite a lot of propaganda was undertaken by Government to reduce unnecessary travel, but it did not have much effect. The passenger travel in terms of passenger miles, apart from military specials, is now nearly 2½ times the pre-war figure. The remedy of course is more coaching stock. It has also been mentioned that railway administrations should put more coaching stock into use. As stated by the Honourable the War Transport Member in his speech while introducing the Railway Budget the improvement of coaching stock position is one of the major tasks of railways in the next few years. During the war it was quite impossible for the railways to build their own coaching stock or even to obtain additional carriages from outside sources. However, as soon as some materials became available, the railways commenced building on any underframes they could collect; and I may repeat what the Honourable the War Transport Member said the other day, that absolute priority has been given to the construction of lower class coaching stock. We have been able to obtain about 300 underframes both of broad gauge and metre gauge, and these with all spare underframes will be utilised for the early increase of lower class passenger stock. It will not take us fifteen years, as has been alleged by the Honourable Mover, to build this stock or to implement our present stock of coaching vehicles. But it cannot also be done overnight. It must take time and it will not be very long.

Then my Honourable friend, Pandit Mukut Bihari Lal, has referred to the inconvenience of the third-class passengers at the booking offices. At some stations, it is true, that there is a great deal of overcrowding opposite booking offices, and at most of those stations, Railway Administrations have put up

[Khan Bahadur Zafar Hossain Khan]

barriers in order to teach the queue habit. It has met with considerable success, and I think that in course of time that unnecessary overcrowding opposite ticket windows is bound to diminish.

He then referred to the difficulties of latrines. In the new coaching stock that we are building, latrines will be of much better type, and now that the workshops have been diverted to the overhaul and repairs of coaching stock, as this stock comes in to the shops, efforts will be made to improve the latrines.

That is all I have to say, Sir.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Sir, I rise to support the cut motion of my Honourable friend, Pandit Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava, with regard to inconvenience of passengers travelling on the Railways. I must say that I have read with interest the speech of the War Transport Member introducing the Railway Budget and I congratulate him on his promises and assurances of doing this and that when the time comes which, I hope, will come sooner than later, but till then the position of the passengers remains what it is today. I am afraid the position is going from bad to worse. I wish the Honourable the War Transport Member had told us or given us some idea as to the period when the situation will improve and when the proposals which he has laid down in his speech would take effect. Of course his proposals are very good on paper, and we are looking forward to that day when these plans will fructify and when his proposals will take actual shape.

The story of the difficulties of travelling of these third-class and upper-class passengers—and I will first deal with the difficulties of third-class passengers—is a sad story, and indeed it is an old story. This question has been discussed in this House, year in and year out, but I must say that things have not improved in any way. The question of third-class passengers is rather very unfortunate. I am proud and happy to say that I had the good luck of travelling in third-class when upper class accommodation was not available and from my own experience I can say that one has to sit with hands and legs folded. The position is rather disgraceful, and I hope the railway authorities would look into the question at an early date. This is not a question that concerns one province or another. It is an all-India question and needs to be remedied immediately.

Sir, there is no use moving these cuts because the cuts are passed and the Government knows for certain that the Demands will be certified by the Governor-General, and the officials will receive their salaries. I think it is rather a criminal waste of time unless our recommendations are accepted and attention is paid to them. In the year 1903, Sir Thomas Robert, who was Special Railway Commissioner recommended special measures. In 1916—as I have said it is an old story—the Sanitary Commissioner of the Government of India submitted his report. In that report he said:

“The Government of India can hardly be aware of the amount of ill-feeling and ill-will towards themselves that these two conditions, namely over-crowding of ordinary trains, and pilgrimage specials. . . .”

After that in 1920-21 the Railway Committee said:

“The view has been urged upon us that 3rd class passengers suffer relatively more than other users of Railways, from lack of adequate facilities and that though they contribute by far greater part of the coaching earnings and nearly 1/3rd of the whole revenue, their requirements have received less attention than those of organized traders and more local class of passengers.”

The income received by Government from the third-class earnings last year was greater by 18 times than the 1st and 2nd class earnings. Similarly the number of persons travelling was 90 times greater than those of the upper classes. In view of all this, I appeal to the Railway Board to see that the grievances of the third-class passengers are redressed and special attention is paid to their grievances.

It is no use denying the fact that third-class passengers have got to come to the railway stations 8 hours earlier to get their tickets. In most cases they

return disappointed and several times they have to buy tickets in the black-market. On more than one occasion I have seen that they have to sleep on footpaths a night before in order to get their tickets next morning.

With regard to waiting rooms for third-class passengers, the position is very bad indeed. They are overcrowded. Most of the waiting rooms on sideway stations have no roofs, no arrangement for water, no lighting arrangements, and no latrines. In the trains there are no fans. In his speech the Honourable the War Transport Member made no reference to fans in third-class compartments, though there is a reference to inter-class. I hope third class passengers will also have the good luck of enjoying fans in summer.

Then, Sir, I would like to refer to the question of third-class passengers being denied the facility of travelling by mail trains. In the Frontier Mail, for instance, we have no third-class bogies. Third-class passengers are really the people who need travelling quicker because they cannot find room to sleep on the journey. If arrangements are made for them to travel by mail trains, they will be able to reach their destination quickly and they will not have to spend their times sitting in the train at night.

Same are the difficulties of Inter-class passengers. I know that in the inter-class compartments the position is worse still; passengers are packed like sardines, and most of them have to keep standing all the time. I hope additional inter-class coaches will be attached on all the trains, or some other arrangement will be made to redress this grievance also.

Now I come to the question of upper-class passengers's difficulties. The second-class compartments are over-crowded. Tickets are issued for more passengers than the seating accommodation can provide. I hope this will not be done. I have seen that many passengers have to sleep on the floor and in most cases they cannot get accommodation even after buying the tickets. There is no light in the bathrooms. We now see heavy imports of bulbs in India, but I regret to say that even today, at any rate on the G. I. P. and the B., B. and C. I. we have no bulbs in the bathrooms of 2nd class compartments. In 1st class bathrooms bulbs have come on the scene in some cases, but lighting arrangement in 1st and 2nd class compartments should be improved. Waiting rooms are not well furnished; bugs are in plenty. At times there is no servant and the waiting rooms remain locked and the keys are kept by the Station Master. There is no light in the waiting rooms at night.

I fail to understand this when railways like the Nizam State Railways have all the comforts and conveniences and they have always had them during the war. I have travelled by those trains and whether you take the first, second or third class compartments or their bathrooms, you will find bulbs everywhere. They have better arrangements. And here we are told that "the war is on and due to war conditions we are not able to see to the comforts of the passengers". I wish Government would follow the good example of the Nizam State Railway.

Considering the difficulty of the passengers, may I appeal to the Honourable Members, particularly to the railway officials and the Honourable Members of the Executive Council to do away with travelling in saloons. I remember when the Congress Governments came into power, Ministers used to travel in second class compartments. They had four berths. Saloon travelling was done away with. I say that until times are better, until the situation improves, I feel that the travelling in saloon by the highest railway officials and even the Executive Councillors should be done away with. Once I saw a Member of the Nizam Executive Council, Honourable Mr. Syed Abdul Azeez, Law Member offer his saloon to the military officers to travel from Hyderabad to Bombay when accommodation was overcrowded. If these saloons which are lying idle could be turned into railway compartments and if Honourable Members when travelling could divide part of their saloons I think the position could be remedied and I think the other passengers would be able to have some accommodation to travel by those saloons.

[Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer]

I come to the question of retiring rooms for the passengers. In stations like Bombay and Delhi and Ajmere we have retiring rooms. I suggest that the question of retiring rooms in other stations should be considered, because in many stations there are no hotels. If there are retiring rooms the difficulties of passengers could be remedied. Where there are such rooms, most of them are kept for railway officials. I suggest that the use of these rooms by railway officials should be discontinued. They should occupy their own railway quarters. Once in Bombay when I went for a retiring room, I was told that under the orders of the Chief Traffic Manager the entire six retiring rooms were reserved for the railway officials for three days because they were leaving for England. Where are the passengers to stay for three days? I am not complaining of the railway officials on duty at the V. T. who are always courteous and obliging but the orders from above compelled them to refuse the passengers.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member has one minute left.

Mr. Ahmed E. H. Jaffer: Then I will bring to the notice of the authorities the difficulties of lady passengers travelling by train. I have noticed that in passenger trains there are no compartments reserved for lady passengers. I hope they will make arrangements to see that in passenger trains we have railway compartments reserved for ladies. I do know that in the mail trains they have, but not in the passenger trains.

Then I would refer you to the question of air conditioned coaches. Now that the summer is coming, if some of the coaches could be air conditioned—I do not suggest that additional coaches should be imported: if they could be the better, but air conditioning should be encouraged and while there are air conditioned coaches for the first class, I suggest the second class passengers should not be denied the right of having air conditioned coaches. They are prepared to pay the extra charge of Rs. 12-8 from Bombay to Delhi if you could turn the second class compartments attached to I class Air-conditioned coaches in the Frontier Mail, this will be welcomed by II class passengers.

Now to the question of catering on trains and the way the food is sold on the railway station, I shall deal with the question of food sold for the third class passengers. I wish the Government, before giving licenses to the food vendors would make compulsory that they would be medically examined once a week or so. There should be some sort of medical arrangement for inspection. In some cases they sell their food without cover. We see a lot of flies on the food. This creates cholera. If the medical authorities are asked in the station to examine this, I think the position will improve. Similarly the question of catering for first and second class passengers is far from satisfactory. I differ in one respect from my Honourable friend, Mr. Nauman. I do not know whether the Government could do that job better. If they could, we are prepared to give them a trial. In any case the condition should improve. I know that on the North Western Railway the present contractors supplied aerated waters which contained germs. I am told the report about this is being pursued. I hope all these things will be remedied.

Mr. President: The Honourable Member's time limit is over.

Sjt. B. S. Hiray (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I rise to support the cut motion. While doing so, I, as a back-bencher in this House, take great pride in getting this chance to ventilate the grievances of the back-benchers of the railway—I mean the third class passengers.

Sir, the agony and torture of the third class passengers is beyond description. The treatment meted out to them is most disgraceful and the indifference with which their grievances are looked into is most callous. The culpable negligence of the railway authorities in this respect is beyond explanation and deserves strong condemnation. Sir, the miserable lot of the third class passengers is heard in this House year after year. The miseries of the lower class passengers are as old as the railways. It was expected that the end of the

company rule of the railways will abolish the miseries of these passengers but the expectations have proved to be mere wishful thinking. Each year in this House a cut is moved and carried. Every year the hardships to which the third class passenger is put are described with vehemence and force. The difficulty in getting the ticket, lack of accommodation in the trains, the lack of sanitary conditions on the station and in the train, the lack of good water supply, waiting rooms and proper food arrangements are each year vividly described. The overcrowding in the third class is notorious. The getting in and the getting out of the third class compartment is an ordeal in itself. But still the Railway Member is not moved.

Sir, the Railway Board has done nothing to better the lot of the lower class passengers. Last year when this point was debated the Government spokesman, one Col. Wagstaff, who looked at railways as a business concern, assured this House that better coaches are being provided and every effort is being made to provide amenities to the lower class passengers. A year has since passed but the matters have not at all improved. The Honourable the Railway Member also had assured this House last year that everything possible will be done, but the position has still deteriorated and the third class passengers, as usual, remain the most neglected client of the railway.

Sir, in the Upper House the Chief Commissioner of Railways has stated that during war time the railway workshops, among other things, constructed twenty-five ambulance cars out of which seventeen were air conditioned. If this is true, Sir, it means that the railway administration has the staff and the skill to construct the suitable coaches for the third class passengers also. But, it seems that they have not the will to improve the lot of the third class passengers and hence this callous neglect.

It is only the road competition that has forced the railway administration to pay some attention to the amenities of the third class passengers. (Interruptions). The Wedgwood Committee came to the rescue of the Railway Board and suggested control of road traffic. This House agreed to the proposal of road control by passing the Motor Vehicles Act with the hope that if the railway earnings increased the lot of the third class passengers will be improved. But it is strange to find that though the railway income has increased by 4 P.M. 100 per cent., the lot of third class passengers has still further deteriorated.

While controlling the road traffic now, the Government further thinks that they should also monopolise the road services so that they may rule supreme in this transport business throughout this country. Monopoly business Sir, whether of an individual or of a corporation or of a state, unless it is a democratic state, is harsh and will squeeze the public. Therefore this House will not agree to this Government monopolising all the transport business that way.

While describing the hardships of the lower class passengers one cannot help criticising the luxuries provided to the upper class passengers. They have special ticket houses, they have special accommodation they have special waiting rooms, special dinner rooms and dinner coaches attached to the trains. And above all they get preferential treatment from the railway staff. It has been proved beyond doubt that this particular class of travel is subsidised by the lower class traveller. The Wedgwood Committee has stated that the Deccan Queen is a losing proposition. The war has to some extent improved the matter. But war transport is subsiding, and it must be remembered further, that this boom period will also not last long.

[At this stage Mr. President vacated the Chair which was then occupied by Mr. Deputy President (Sir Mohammad Yamin Khan)].

Moreover, many times we see that many people travel by upper class today through helplessness, as they find it difficult to get into the third class compartments. Usually a man purchases a third class ticket and when he finds that there is no accommodation in the third class or that he cannot effect an

[Sjt. B. S. Hiray]

entry into the third class compartment, he gets into the second class compartment and then pays the excess fare. This has to some extent raised the earnings of the upper class, but still the income from the lower class fares is nearly 80 per cent. of the passenger traffic income. This higher income from upper classes will not last long and the Honourable Member for War Transport therefore must look to the lower class traveller as his chief supporter and abstain from subsidising the upper classes.

This time the Railway Board has kept aside a fund of 15 crores known as the Betterment Fund but that fund is not meant for third class amenities only as is generally understood in this House or outside. This fund has its own history. In February 1945 the Standing Finance Committee expressed the view that "steps were necessary towards building and adequate reserve during years of prosperity for financing the amenities to lower class travellers, expenditure on which is not likely to be remunerative". Accordingly taking into consideration this recommendation, the Government has decided to form a separate fund not only for third class passengers amenities but amenities of all the passengers, and on works connected with staff welfare and on certain other classes of works which cannot be remunerative. It seems that these 15 crores which have been set aside are not only meant for third class passengers' amenities but also for better coaches for upper classes, and better stations may be also constructed out of it.

Mr. Deputy President: The Honourable Member's time is up.

Sjt. B. S. Hiray: I want two or three minutes more, Sir, to finish my speech.

You will be surprised to observe Sir that still lower class passengers are huddled in goods wagons. I have a letter from the President of the Chamber of Commerce, Sangali that on the 14th of this month people travelling on the Barsi Light Railway were huddled in goods wagons, men women and children together. Last year the War Transport Member wanted to know whether goods wagons were still being used for passenger traffic. Here is definite information in that respect. Will the Honourable Member look into it and see that such brutal treatment does not continue any longer? The President of the Chamber of Commerce, Sangali writes that it is high time that the Barsi Light Railway is taken over by the Government. I commend the same to the Honourable Member.

I am informed that some trains are out of bounds for military personnel. Military men with all the respect that they deserve have added more to the hardships of the lower class passengers. No sooner the train reaches the platform than these people burst open the door, throw their luggage and themselves into the train not even caring whether anyone inside is hurt or injured. Once he gets in he occupies a whole berth even if need be by force. If it is true that military personnel are not to travel in the coaches reserved for civilians or that some trains are prohibited for them, will it not be wise, for the convenience of the civilian passengers, to mention the same in the railway timetables.

Similarly this scandal of obtaining tickets at big stations can also be humanised. You have advertised that the booking offices will be open for 24 hours but that is not done. Most of the time the booking offices are closed and are opened hardly an hour before the train's arrival. If you can by experience come to a conclusion on the average issue of tickets and fix a quota, I am certain that the miserable queues can be avoided and public torture spared.

The amount allotted for public amenities is still negligible. No provision is made to relieve the overcrowding. The programme of building coaches is not speedy enough. I do not know whether the Honourable Member has any idea of running more trains to relieve the traffic but there seems to be no hope of that. It comes to this, that the lower class travel will be as it is for a year or more. Hence Sir, I support the cut.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Sir, we all of us know only too well the conditions of third class travel, we all of us deplore that they should exist and we all know the reasons why they have been so difficult during the war. I think the best thing that I can do this afternoon is to give the House some information regarding the progress that has been made towards a return to the normal and the sort of programme that we have in view for effecting the improvement.

My Honourable friend the Member for Bombay Southern Division: Muhammadan Kurai, asked when we should expect an improvement. Soon after V.J. Day we took the matter in hand and we put on altogether about 665 trains with a daily increased train mileage of over 39,000 miles, 39,000 miles a day of train mileage. That must have afforded relief to a very large number of people. We were able to do that despite the fact that we have only had back from the military between V.J. Day and the 1st January something like 102 coaches on the broad gauge and about a dozen on the metre gauge. I mentioned in my Budget speech that there were no fewer than 1,366 broad gauge and 416 metre gauge coaches still with the military, 1,366 broad gauge coaches as against 102 we have got back so far and 416 metre gauge coaches as against a dozen or so that we have got back so far. When these come back to us and we have reconditioned and put them into service, it is quite clear that a very great improvement will take place in passenger travel.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (East Central Punjab: Muhammadan): When are you likely to get them?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I was just going to mention that. Everybody is anxious to know that—we are just as anxious as my Honourable friend to know when we are likely to get those back. The answer is that they will begin coming back before very long, and the reason for their not coming back faster is this. Only recently are we beginning to receive back from overseas, from the Far East large numbers of troops who went on service in those countries overseas. They are now coming back at the rate of something like 40,000 a month, and all those troops have to be carried, largely up to the north of India, every month. In addition to that there are all the troops which have to be brought back from the Burma frontiers and from all over India back to their homes to be demobilised, come from Bengal to Madras or wherever they happen to live. There are also large numbers of men still serving in India who have to have their ordinary routine leave. The result is that there are still very large numbers of soldiers still requiring to be moved. But it is a gradually decreasing number as demobilisation goes on, and so we have strong hopes, as a result of looking into this programme for moving these troops, that we shall begin getting back substantial numbers of vehicles from April onwards. From that date the military demands will begin to decrease, until they gradually fade away into practically nothing, when we shall hope to get back the bulk of the vehicles which are now with them. It is quite clear that this will make an enormous difference to the conditions of civilian travel. Not only that. We are taking other steps to provide new coaching stock, apart from the stock that we are getting back from the army. It was mentioned that something like 216 broad gauge underframes and 94 metre gauge frames or 310 altogether, are expected from Australia, and bodies will be built on them as soon as they arrive. In addition to that, we have 165 broad gauge underframes in hand being fitted with bodies in the railway workshops, and we have 83 metre gauge underframes now being fitted in the railway workshops. In our 1946-47 programme we have 278 broad gauge and 168 metre gauge coaches on the programme. The orders for these underframes have not yet been placed, but so far as possible indigenous resources will provide them.

That gives some detail of what we are doing in this country now to provide carriages.

I mentioned the other day in the House what our long term programme was and said that over a period of years our annual requirements based on an average life of 35 years would be 820 carriages per year—366 broad gauge and

[Sir Edward Benthall]

454 metre gauge—costing 4 crores a year. That is our forward programme. I think that, if you will consider those facts and bearing in mind that as soon as possible we shall fit the new type of carriage with easier sitting accommodation and sleeping accommodation for third class, there will be a very steady appreciation in the quality of travel, from the point of view both of room for the individual and of their comfort also.

I shall just mention one or two other points. The lighting position should definitely become better. As I mentioned earlier on in answer to some questions, we ordered over 5 lakhs of bulbs for last year, but we got less than 4 lakhs—we were 1½ lakhs short, which explains why railway carriages are still not as well lit as we had hoped. For 1946 we have requirements of nearly 4 lakhs of bulbs, but we have some hope of getting 7½ lakhs, and if we get that figure of 7½ lakhs our lighting problem should be a very different one by the end of the year.

As regards saloons, it was suggested that ministers in the provincial governments used to travel 2nd class. I suggest that if they did that they would not be able under present conditions to do very much work *en route*; and if a second class compartment was reserved for them, then they would be crowding out other second class passengers and creating still more pressure on the available second class, because there are not extra coaches available and therefore if they went into the second class they would be pushing out somebody else. Railway servants have to travel in saloons because it is their home for the time they are out on tour. The orders are that their use must be restricted as much as possible but their use does not make any difference to the convenience of other passengers because, as I said, they are not shutting out other coaches and therefore if their saloons were not attached on necessary tours, it would not make any difference worth while speaking about. As regards the use of saloons by higher officers, I may say that the Board have given up all their saloons, excepting one for emergencies, and other high officers such as Principal staff officers have given up the use of their saloons also. So to a large extent have the General Managers, except when they have got to use them for their business. Therefore in these days minimum use is made of saloons.

My Honourable friend Mr. Hiray said that we had not revealed our programme for coaching stock. Well, I have revealed it as fully as I possibly can. I do not think he can really want more figures than those I have given this afternoon. He also said that in our road programme we were wanting to do away with competition between the road and rail. That is not the case. We have made it perfectly clear that we want the road and the rail to compete in service, and I think myself that, if we can provide quite comfortable rail accommodation, you will find many people who now go by bus returning to the train. When you see the type of sitting accommodation we hope to fit, it will be a certain advance over what the bus can provide and I am sure that many people will prefer to travel by train rather than by the relatively uncomfortable bus. I am hoping that that will be so; but our whole objective is to get competition in service, but not competition by cutting the rates, which will mean in the end decreased service for the public.

In conclusion, the Honourable Member seemed to think that a good deal of the programme which I have given him is not one that is likely to be realised. I do not know how to answer an Honourable Member whose criticism is entirely destructive. I do not know how he can expect us to produce 10,000 carriages of an improved type out of the hat overnight. He complains that this programme has to be spread over a number of years. Any practical man would realise that that would have to be the case. I should be grateful for any suggestions as to how it could be speeded up. In the course of his speech he referred to the 76 lakhs set aside for amenities to the public and he wanted an assurance that the bulk of that was to be spent on third class passengers. Am I wrong in presuming that if he gets a satisfactory answer to that, he will withdraw his motion?

Pandit Mukut Bihari Lal Bhargava: No.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I thought not. I think my Honourable friend is not really interested in my answer to his question. The answer is this. If he will look at page 17 of the Explanatory Memorandum, he will find the details set out under 9 or 10 heads of how that money is to be spent and on what railways. I have not got any more details as to what percentage precisely is to be spent on the third class passengers.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena (Lucknow Division: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Why don't you travel in third class one of these days and find out the amenities for yourself?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: When I travel. I keep my eyes open.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Don't do it. You will inconvenience so many passengers. Other people will be crowded out.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Anyway I can give the assurance that the orders to the Railway Administrations are that the amenities of the lower class passengers are to take priority and I should think that well over 75 per cent. of this expenditure will probably be for the benefit of the third class passengers. If you look at the provision for raised platforms particularly on the B., B. and C. I. and South India, it is difficult to say how much of this is earmarked for third class passengers and how much for upper class. You can only divide it up according to the number of heads travelling and of course the number of third class is 90 per cent. or more.

Mr. P. K. Salve: What arrangements are you proposing to make for travel at nights? Are you thinking of obtaining the type of the Pullman car or coaches as in America—for the comfort of long distance travellers at night?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: They are not exactly like the Pullmans in America. The new design of third class coaches provides a fitted seat which gives much more seating comfort than the bare board which a third class passenger had in the past and it also has folding backs which turn into three tiers of bunks, which will provide for sleeping. I have seen the new design. If it is possible to get one for the Central Advisory Council to have a look at, I will try to do so.

Mr. Tamizuddin Khan (Dacca cum Mymensingh: Muhammadan Rural): Will the third class coaches that will be built henceforward be of new types? Have you got any programme in the coming year? How many coaches of the new type are proposed to be built?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I have not got the details with me. The carriages which are being put on to the underframes in the shops at the present moment are of the old improved type but not of the new type, because we have not got up to that stage but the whole of the new programme, as soon as possible will be turned over to the new type.

Mr. P. K. Salve: If not a Pullman car, is it going to be what I may term a Killman carriage?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I think I have covered all the points. I should like however to mention one point. The difficulties which we experience on the Railways here are very similar to those which are being experienced in other countries, especially in those countries which suffered from the war where travelling conditions are very bad indeed. Even in regard to the railways in the United Kingdom, conditions are not at all yet up to the pre-war standard and only yesterday I received a copy of a newspaper from Home with an advertisement by the "Big Four" railways pointing out to the public that to restore conditions to the pre-war level will take time but I do think that from the very near future onwards you will see a steadily improving position in all classes. But I cannot promise you that we shall get back to anything like pre-war standard for some time to come, because, as I said before, it is bound to take time.

Sjt. B. S. Hiray: May I know if some trains are prohibited for the travel of military personnel?

Mr. Deputy President: No questions now. This is not question time. The question is:

"That the demand under the head 'Railway Board' be reduced by Rs. 100."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND NO. 11. NEW CONSTRUCTION

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Sir, I move:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,00,00,000 be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of 'New Construction'."

Mr. Deputy President: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,00,00,000 be granted to the Governor General-in-Council to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1947, in respect of 'New Construction'."

Want of Policy in New Construction

Sri A. Karunakara Menon (West Coast and Nilgiris: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I move:

"That the demand under the head 'New Construction' be reduced by Rs. 100."

It is well known that generally railways are constructed after a good deal of agitation on the part of the public and after elaborate inquiries conducted by the Government into the question of public utility, industrial and agricultural possibilities and the traffic and financial prospects. During the war several lines were dismantled for military requirements. Therefore, but for the war these lines would have continued even now. Under the circumstances, what we would have expected is that, as soon as the war was over, those lines which were lines of public utility would have been restored before any new lines were taken up for consideration. Now, what do we find? We find from the proceedings of the meetings of the Standing Finance Committee for Railways (page 159) that the Government have sanctioned traffic and engineering survey for 56 new lines. We are told on page 160 that the restoration of only two old lines was decided upon for 1946-47. A question was recently put to the Honourable the Railway Member about the Shoranur-Nilambur Railway in the Malabar district. That line was constructed about 25 years ago. That line is only about 80 miles in length. The answer given by the Railway Member was that it had been decided not to restore the line. I hope that that decision is only a temporary one and that it is likely to be changed in the light of the facts that would be brought before the Railway member and this assembly.

Now, it will be interesting to know how many crores or lakhs of rupees have been spent on this line. That line was built after a great deal of consideration in a rugged country on account of the growth of industrial and commercial projects and also from a strategic point of view. The land acquisition must have cost a good deal. Now, there are railway buildings, railway bridges and several other constructions. They are there even now. Only the rails have to be put and the telegraph wires to be installed. But the Government say that they have decided not to restore the line. It is impossible to understand this attitude. How much money has been wasted on that line? Are those lands to be sold by public auction? It will be a huge waste of public money if the line is not restored. It was after a great deal of investigation that this line was built. How is it that after 25 years they thought that they had committed a mistake? What guarantee is there that if that line is not restored now, they will not be committing another mistake? Once these railway lines are built, they create an economic change in the area. Formerly people used to travel in those places by means of bullock carts and other kinds of conveyance. Due to the construction of this line, all those things are gone. People began to depend upon these railways for travel. Now, after 25 years this line is abolished and people find it very difficult to travel because the outlook of the people has changed and there are no facilities for travel. I might bring to the notice of the Railway Member that it was from a strategic point of view also that that

railway was built. Both the Hindus and the Muhammadans of that locality are uneducated and some of them are of a turbulent nature. It was on account of that also that the Government thought of constructing this line. It had a great civilising influence upon the people of that locality. Apart from that, I might say that this line will prove a great blessing and had proved a great blessing to the people. Shoranur is at one end and Nilambur is at the other end. Nilambur plays a great part in trade and is a centre of great commercial and industrial possibilities and importance. Paper mills are being contemplated to be erected there. It is very close to Gudalur in the Nilgiri district. It is a place noted for timber and the forest there is noted for its teak, bamboo and other forest produce. Pykara scheme is about to be introduced also in the locality. I mention all these things with regard to this line only as an illustration. I am not pleading for any special line. I am only saying from the general point of view what a huge waste of money there will be if such lines are not restored and new lines are built instead. If this line is restored, it will connect Nilambur with the Cochin harbour also. It will be of great economic and trade value. Is it not easier, is it not more profitable, is it not more important to restore these old lines before the Government venture into "fresh fields and pastures new"? A word with respect to new constructions also. Preference ought to be given to those lines that had already been investigated and that had already been surveyed before any new line is contemplated. The necessity of connecting Mangalore with Bombay either directly or by connecting it with the nearest railway station in the Mysore State leading to Bombay will suggest itself to anybody who looks at a Railway map of India. People on the West coast have to come to the East coast to travel to the West coast north of Mangalore. A connection with Mysore will entail only a distance of about 100 miles. It will be giving an opening for the Mysore State also to the sea. There were schemes, if I am correctly informed, with respect to these lines but they have all been scrapped without any reason. I understand that there was a scheme to take up the line from Mangalore to Udipi also. I do not know why it was given up. Udipi is an important place and I do not know why the West coast is neglected like this. On the whole, I might say that the Government is not doing the right thing in not restoring the old lines or in constructing the new lines without taking wider considerations into their notice. The restoration of the old lines ought to be pursued first before thinking of constructing the 56 new lines that are being surveyed at present.

Sir, I move.

Mr. Deputy President: Cut motion moved:

"That the demand under the head 'New Construction' be reduced by Rs. 100."

Sreejot Rohini Kumar Choudhuri (Assam Valley: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, the other day when I was speaking on the Railway Budget, I drew the attention of the Honourable Member in charge to certain special conditions. Possibly I was far too realistic in my description of the inconvenience of third class passengers that it must have induced the Honourable the Railway Member not to touch on those grievances at all in his reply. Today I am going to mention some of the grievances which relate to this particular cut motion. As the time at my disposal is short, I will give mere headlines of what I want to say. Later on if I find time, I will try to dilate on those points.

The Honourable the Railway Member is perfectly acquainted with the facts relating to the subjects on which I am going to touch and he will have no difficulty in replying to them, if he is inclined to do so. The first point is the extension of the B. & A. Railway line from Rangapura north to Tezpu. Secondly, the diversion of the B. & A. Railway line from Bonaigaon to Pandu, *via* Goalpara. Thirdly, the construction of a bridge from the river Brahmaputra either at the point known as Jugigopa or Amingaon to Pandu. Fourthly, the extension of the railway line from Mymensingh to Pandu on the south bank of the river Brahmaputra. This line was surveyed long ago. Fifthly, the restoration of the line Shaistaganj to Habiganj and also the line from Sibsagar to Khwang.

[Sreejut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri]

There are two other minor points. The stoppage of the passenger train at Kamakshya station for the benefit of the pilgrims who come from all parts of India and the stoppage of the mail train at Nalbari station and to this attention was drawn not only in my budget speech but also by my predecessor representing Assam on the floor of this House. That is all I have got to say and I do not wish to take up more time of the House.

Mr. Ali Asghar Khan (Assam: Muhammadan): Sir, I support this Motion. I should like to say that it will be sheer injustice on the part of the Honourable the Railway Member to construct new lines before taking up the dismantled lines which were removed solely during the war. Sir, where new lines are to be constructed, the people of that locality are not used to the railways. If any new project is taken up and the old lines are not restored in the first instance, then the people of the locality from which the lines were dismantled will be put to a lot of discomfort and inconvenience. Besides, trade also will suffer. As it is people of that locality are passing through great difficulties. So long, they had to bear it because of war and the needs of war were much greater than the needs of the people. As soon as the war is over, it is only fair and just that the lines should be restored first. In those places, the people were used to travelling in railways, trade also was flourishing because of the railway line. Now suddenly if communication is cut off in those parts, it will be a great economic loss to the people of the locality. It is true that railway lines should be increased for improvement of the country. It will be conceded that it will increase railway income. But you should not do it at the expense of some other locality where it already existed. I submit you should construct both old and new lines. If it is not possible at the moment to construct both at the same time than the old lines should be restored first before you think of constructing new lines. Reconstruction of old lines will be much cheaper, as the railroad, etc., is already laid out, only materials are required to be taken back from the place to which they have been taken and only fitting is required, whereas the construction of new lines will cost much more in the shape of surveying the place and so on.

Here I want to mention one point which has already been mentioned by my Honourable friend Sreejut Rohini Kumar Chaudhury and that is connecting Shaistaganj and Habiganj, especially because Habiganj is the subdivisional headquarters. Before the war there was a line connecting the two. People had to go there to transact their business connected with courts. I hope the Honourable Member will see that this line is restored to them at an early date for the sake of their travel convenience as well as for their trade facilities. The report I have got is that the material are not used and it is lying somewhere in Shaistaganj station. If it is a fact it will be very easy to restore this line. I will ask Government to reconstruct this line along with the other lines which were dismantled during the war, and I hope the Honourable Member will see to this and take action as early as possible with a sense of justice. I appeal to the House to support this.

Mr. Tamizuddin Khan: Sir, I have full sympathy with the object of this motion, namely, that the old lines which have been dismantled or abandoned should be taken up as early as possible. But it is difficult to support the view that no new surveys even should be taken up before all the old lines are restored. That is a proposition which was made by the Honourable Mover and I cannot support that. The country is yet undeveloped in many places so far as railways are concerned. Take England, which in size is one-tenth of India; but we are ten times behind the lineage of England. So I do not agree with the view of the Honourable the War Transport Member expressed in this House the other day that so far as new construction is concerned they will not enter upon, any large programme. I think there is scope and demand for opening, many more new lines. However, I will not deal with that. I cannot support the view that even surveys of new lines should not be taken up before the old

lines are restored. In Bengal, for example, the famine has shown the necessity of having new lines in many places; and unless these lines are taken up I think it will retard the development of the country. As the time is short I will not say any thing more. I only give a qualified support to the motion.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Sir, may I ask a question? Out of four thousand miles of rail which were dismantled during the war, I want to know how many have been restored, what is the programme for restoration, what is the programme later on and what will be finally abandoned.

Pundit Thakur Das Bhargava: Sir, I beg to press the claims of Panipat-Gohana-Rohtak line which was dismantled during the war for its being re-opened.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Sir, I will deal rapidly with the points raised and I will deal with them in order, first of all with the particular railways mentioned. With regard to the Shoranur-Nilambur line, this was built as a strategic line originally, for causes arising out of the Moplah rebellion. It is now no longer required as a strategic line and therefore its restoration is to be considered on purely commercial grounds. It has always been an uneconomic line and, as far as we can see, always will be. The question, therefore, before us is whether we should restore it as a convenience to the local people, with a perpetual loss to the rest of the country, or whether we should ask for a guarantee from the people who are going to benefit, or alternatively,—a course that we are now considering,—whether we should adopt an alternative alignment which looks like being more promising and more profitable, or lastly, whether we should not use the alignment of the railway and the bridges which exist for the purpose of building a road, which will be much cheaper, and use buses and lorries which are likely to take all the traffic offering. That is the problem that we are faced with in one way or another all over the country; and what we are doing is to consult the provincial Governments. We feel that the provincial Government—in this case the Government of Madras—are the best people to judge whether the old alignment is desirable or a new alignment or a road or what; and throughout the country we are now being largely guided by the views of the provincial Governments, because by that means we can also co-ordinate our railway construction and restoration with the road-building programme. What applies therefore to the Shoranur-Nilambur line applies right throughout the country.

With regard to my Honourable friends from Assam the first speaker Mr. Choudhuri seemed to me to be pressing simultaneously for the restoration of one or two lines and the building of several others. That seems to go against the Resolution. He wants them done simultaneously, whereas the Mover wanted restoration of the old lines, whether economic or uneconomic, to come first. And I respectfully suggest that Mr. Choudhuri and Mr. Tamizuddin are correct and that the thing to do is to look at it as a whole and not from the point of view of the particular local line concerned. The total mileage of branch lines which were lifted and which the provincial Governments want to restore, is 400 or thereabouts, and these are being taken in hand in accordance with the views of the provincial Governments. As regards the Habiganj-Shaistaganj line which was referred to by two Honourable Members I find that it is proposed to be restored and restored in priority. The provincial Government have specially asked that that should be placed high on the programme and we are proposing to meet their wishes and get on with it; surveys for that purpose are, I believe, in hand at the present time. On the B. & A. Railway there are two other projects,—the Moranhat-Khowanj and Amnura-Chapai-Nawabganj which it is also proposed to restore, the latter one also in priority. These are cases of restoration that were asked for; the others mentioned are cases of new construction.

Shri Sri Prakasa: What about the Jaunpur-Sultanpur-Lucknow and Chandpur-Siau-Gajraula lines?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I have not got information about all of them. But I have a list covering what we are doing and I shall be pleased to show it to any one who wants to see it.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: May I know the total milage which it is contemplated to restore?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: About four hundred miles.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Out of four thousand? Kindly see page 7 of the Chief Commissioner's speech.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Yes, four thousand miles were lifted and sent overseas or used in India, but they were not all branch lines by any means.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: How many were branch lines?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: It is difficult to say without notice. A good deal of it was sidings, etc., I have a list here; quite a good proportion of it is intended to be restored.

Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: What percentage?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: It is difficult to give it at short notice. But I shall be happy to produce it.

I said in 1943 when we were discussing the Railway Budget that each of these projects for restoration will be considered on its merits at the time of restoration, just as the question of which lines should be picked up was considered on its merits when the need arose to pick them up. In the main it was the unremunerative lines which were lifted and of course they are likely still to be unremunerative. The question before us is whether we should restore unremunerative lines immediately for the benefit of the local people rather than build lines which we believe to be very urgently required by the public as a whole. It seems to me that there is no absolute principle in the matter whether you should restore an unremunerative old line or build what you believe to be a remunerative new line, and I see no reason at all why an unremunerative old line should have priority over an urgently needed new line. If for instance you are wishing to open up a coal field or a coal area where a line is most urgently required having regard to the fact that the country is short of coal, surely that is more urgent than restoring a line which must be a perpetual burden on the country to an area which could be equally well served by road with lorries and buses.

Shri Sri Prakasa: Have you dispensed with only unremunerative lines?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The only remunerative one which was picked up was the Cawnpore-Khairada line which it is proposed to restore for two reasons; first it is probably remunerative, and secondly it is a valuable alternative line to Cawnpore. But, Sir, it seems to me that if you have got, for instance, a new coal field, or if you are asked by a Provincial Government, as we have been in the Punjab, to build a line to a new dam site, then there seems to be a much greater urgency and it is a much better proposition than restoring an old unremunerative branch line.

Shri Sri Prakasa: But you must be very sure.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I don't think that there can be much doubt about that when you have perhaps 15 or 16 years experience of paying out money on that branch line.

On the question of the merits of the motion, I cannot therefore agree with the impropriety of opening up new lines before old lines are restored for the reason that I have given. As regards want of policy in new construction, I

cannot agree that there is a want of policy. Perhaps for the first time in the history of the Railways we have a definite policy. It is to discuss the new lines with the Provincial Governments and settle the alignments having regard to the views of the Provincial Governments and, in particular, to their views regarding the road development plan; and, secondly, if you will look at our map of projected developments, you will see that it covers all the blank places on the map, except the Bikaner desert, with a view to bringing all villages within 30 miles of railways. When our plan is completed, there will be a few areas in the middle not covered by the network, but, generally speaking, the plan which we have in mind will achieve that result. That is a definite plan and one concerning which we have consulted with the Provincial Governments, and therefore, Sir, I must strongly oppose the motion.

Mr. Deputy President: The House is adjourned till Eleven O'clock tomorrow morning.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock, on Tuesday the 26th February 1946.

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